MEANING OF
IN
EXISTENTIALIS



B.N. TRIPATHI

About the Book

Meaning of Life in Existentialism by Dr. Bashishtha Narain Tripathi is a comprehensive as well as in-depth study of a major issue in modern philosophy, which has hitherto remained relatively unexplored. The issue of determining the concept of Existentialism has now extended to the fields of literature and other disciplines of the Humanities. The study is bound to interest scholars of not only philosophy but of literature and all those branches of studies engaged in exploring the complex problems of life and existence. The present work is complete in every respect. In the first two chapters the learned author has discussed in great detail the genesis, perspective and philosophical elements of Existentialism. Chapter Three contains a critical analysis of the basic issues of Existentialism, which are shown to have a perennial relevance to human thought. There is hardly anything worth-noting which has escaped the author's keen gaze, and there is hardly any study of Existentialism which has not been mentioned with discriminating remarks. Chapters Four to Fourteen are devoted to detailed discussions of individual Existentialists, both philosophers and men of letters; not only Kierkegaard, Heideggar and Sartre, but also Nietzsche, Kafka and Dostoevsky and indeed, all those who have contributed to Existentialist thought have found a place.

Dr. Tripathi has described and explained every facet of each thinker with comparative insight in such a way that the salient features of his thought emerge in all clarity; his discussion is rounded off with a critical estimate of each thinker, which speaks volumes for Dr. Tripathi's profound knowledge and maturity of judgment. The conclusion gathers all the important points developed in the book and defines the role and significance of the Existentialist movement in modern philosophical thought. Dr. Tripathi's final estimate of Existentialism includes his well thought-out criticism of the movement including its limitations.

The book contains an up-to-date and highly useful Bibliography at the end. The bibliography lists all the important material on the subject; original works, critical and expository books. The book is, no doubt, a major contribution to the study of Existentialism and will prove indispensable to the students and scholars of philosophy and literature.

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Meaning of Life in Existentialism

Bashishtha Narain Tripathi

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Dedicated

to

my uncle

Professor Raj Roshan Tripathi

Preface

Existentialism has been one of the most influential philosophies in the 20th century, but it has also been one of the most controversial systems. Its very unity as a system of thought is in doubt and Wahl prefers to refer to it with a plural title, "Philosophies of Existence". Fernando Molina has called her book on the subject, Existentialism as Philosophy. There is also no agreement among writers and philosophers themselves as to who should be listed as an existentialist philosopher? Is Kierkegaard one of the predecessors or an existentialist proper? Does existential argument permit the entity of God or not?

The difficulties of conceptual interpretation arise from several sources. Existentialism is a protest against rationalism; it is deliberately irrational. The result is that the traditional tools of philosophical study are inadequate for the purpose and conventional approach finds serious faults of logic in existentialism. Mary Warnock in her book Existentialism has remarked that "Existentialism is a compound of emotional and intellectual factors to an equal degree" and that this novelty in philosophy may be the secret of its success. She adds, "It is also what makes it difficult to unite about." The term existence itself is liable to varying interpretation. Morton White in his introductory remarks on Existentialism in 'The Age of Analysis' has pointed out to the controversiality of the word. Sartre himself has observed in Existentialism and Humanism: "What then is this that we called Existentialism? Most of them who are making use of this word would be highly confused if required to explain its meaning."

The result of ambiguities which surround existentialist thought is its wide mis-interpretation. Above all, this philosophy has been charged with extreme subjectivism, pessimism and even nihilism. The popular view is that it is mostly nega-

tive, morbidly individualistic and devoid of values of any kind. In this connection it is pertinent to quote a remark of Olson in An Introduction of Existentialism "The reader who has dabbled only casually into existentialist literature or who knows existentialists represented as advocates of a class of human values... He may also be surprised to hear that existentialists are seeking to mitigate or overcome frustration and disillusionment."

It is a little surprising that a philosophy whose total concentration is on man, should be represented as denying all human values. Sartre has clearly stated that existentialism does not ignore the human society and that in taking a decision it decides on behalf of the whole mankind. Existentialism does not aim at plunging man into despair : its final goal is to prepare man through anguish, abandonment and despair for a genuine life, it is basically concerned with the human condition as a complete form of choice. The fundamental issue, therefore, is the meaning of life. In Camus' play Caligula, one of the characters says, "To love one's life is a little thing and I shall have the courage to do so if it is necessary, but to see the meaning of this life dissipated, to see our reason for existing disappear, that is what is unbearable. One cannot live without meaning."

The aim of the proposed work is to investigate this subject. To enter into the depths of the problem, it will be necessary to examine the entire literature both original and critical that has grown around existentialism and then extract from it the existentialist conception of life and values which inhere in it. The purpose is to make a full statement of the 'meaning of life' in existentialist philosophy borne out by textual evidence of all kinds.

I am aware of the possible objections which may be raised against the subject of my study, which has already attracted the attention of numerous historians and critics. In my defence, I only venture to submit that the study has been undertaken

with the conviction that there is still room for further investigation and research in this area. In saying so I do not in the least wish to minimise the contributions already made by scholars in the field. On the contrary, I am deeply indebted to them and have acknowledged this throughout the study.

My heart-felt gratitude goes to the eminent and distinguished truth-seekers who have enlightened all those who wish to investigate the meaning of life. Their all-embracing expanse of studies, all over the mysteries of the inexplicable creation have opened a bright avenue to me. My head bows down in gratitude and reverence before Prof. P. B. Vidyarthi and Prof. R. S. Srivastav, Deptt. of Philosophy, Ranchi University, Bihar who extended their full support and bestowed upon me healthy inspiration Again I cannot forget the sympathetic attitude shown to me by other friends of mine. My special thanks are due to my learned friends Prof. R. S. Sharma, Deptt. of English, Banaras Hindu University, and Prof. T. P. Tripathi who have stood by me through thick and thin. What can I render them in return for these labours of love ? Really, I have nothing for them but a sense of mute gratefulness mixed with an outpouring of heart in the shape of sincere blessings.

I would like to give thanks to my cousin,brothers Ashutosh and Girish who were eagerly awaiting the publication of this book. I cannot forget the affection shown to me by eldest members of my family like Dr. Ram Raj Tripathi, Principal Jhulan Nath Tripathi and Dharma Raj Tripathi. Lastl y, I give thanks to the younger generation of my family viz. Vyas. Abinash and Shailendra who set me free from domestic burden during higher study.

21 April, 1987.
Varanasi

Bashishtha Narain Tripathi

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER-ONE

Historical Background and The Genesis of Existentialism

The modern world, torn asunder by the two great World-Wars, is facing extinction due to the fatal nuclear weapons invented by science, and there is little hope of the survival and resurrection of humanity. Man is being replaced by machines very fast—so much so that the fountains of love have run dry and life has been rendered mechanical and ex hypothesi destitute of meaning. The iron in the soul has negated fraternity and alienated man from man. "Red human blood flows in broad streams from one end of the earth to the other. Ever-expanding misery spreads its gloomy shadow over longer and larger areas. The fortunes, happiness and comfort of untold millions have disappeared. Peace, security and safety have vanished. Prosperity and well-being have become in many countries but a memory, freedom a mere myth. A great tornado sweeps over the whole of mankind."[1]

The root cause of down-fall and decay is not traceable in existing driving forces of society outwardly. Its root is lying deep in the prevailing culture itself "...the main issue of our times is not democracy versus totalitarianism, nor liberty versus despotism, neither is it capitalism versus communism, nor pacifism versus militarism, nor internationalism versus nationalism, nor any of the current popular issues daily proclaimed by statesmen and politicians, professors and ministers. All these popular issues are but small side-issues, the sensate

1. Pitirim A. Sorokin : The Crisis of Our Age, New York. E.P. Dutton & Co., INC., 1941, p. 15.

form of culture and a way of life versus another, in different form."[2] The same crisis created by the last two World-Wars has not only changed the entire map of the world but has also degraded and demoralised man and has compelled the thinkers to tackle the problem in a new perspective. A modern critic pours out his feelings in these words : "In our view the influence of the existentialist movement can be understood only as the aftermath of the two World-Wars as Trophy events. If material possessions are lost in an instant, if friends and relations are killed everyday, the only thing left is oneself, one's own existence."[3] The entire existential literature is pregnant with the burning problems. "The present human situation may be characterised under five headings : depersonalising, faithfless reification, levelling down, hollowing through constant noise, sham in almost all spheres and surrender to the instincts."[4] To all intents and purposes, the sincere valuation of existentialism can be made by peeping through the devastating and sinking culture of the present era. "Existentialism, rather, is an expression of profound dimension of modern spiritual and emotional temper and is shown in almost all aspects of our culture."[5] Further, it is explained with clarity that "Existentialism in short, is the endeavour to understand man by cutting below the cleavage between subject and object which has bedeviled western thoughts and science, since shortly after the Renaissance."[6] 'To be' is 'to live'. To live is to act and to act is to choose and to choose is to invent values, and to invent values is to be responsible and to be responsible is to be moral. Man is a moral being by necessity. Human reality

2. Ibid., p. 22.
3. J. Von. Rintelen : Beyond Existentialism, London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, Museum Street, 1961, Introduction, p. 9.
4. Ibid., p. 98.
5. Existence, edited by Ernst & Angel & Henri F. Ellen Berger, p. 11.
6. Ibid., p. 11.

is in its nature sick, for it is perpetually haunted by a totality which is freedom minus responsibility—this is the Being of God which is a contradiction. Human consciousness is irremediably unhappy. This all sounds very desperate. It is here that Sartre talks of 'nostalgia for existence', Heidegger of 'Sorge und Gervorfeneit' (care and forlornness), Jaspers of 'Grenzsituation' (limiting-situation), Marcel of 'the opposition between what we *have* and what we *are*'. Neitzsche talks of a tragic sense of life and Pascal has a very pathetic view of man—"Description of man : dependence, desire of independence, need. Condition of man : inconsistency, weariness, unrest", Camus—'feeling of the Absurd'. When man looks at himself, the disorders of his self and the unintelligible forces that control him, he feels unsure of himself, distressed in spirit, sick into death. There is no unhappiness worse than division. We crave for fulfilment, for redemption from the fall. We must reach out beyond the frontiers of this dual, divided consciousness. The age old cry is on our lips; asato mā sad gamaya, tamaso mā jyotirgamaya, mṛtyor mā'mṛtaṃ gamaya—"Lead me from the unreal to the real—lead me from darkness to light, Lead me from death to immortality."[7]

Philosophy is the universal explanation of things and philosophers hunt for values in accordance with the march of time. "Existential approach to the problem of values is a total rejection of traditional approach wherein values are 'fixed eternal essences' independent of the historic life—world which we live and struggle to exist in. Existential approach being phenomenological in nature aims at revealing, describing and clarifying values as they come into being due to our being-in-the-world, which is always historical, situational and existential."[8] Sartre tries to make it clear that modern approach does

7. Br. Up. I, 3, 28, Quoted in S, Radhakrishnan, History of Philosophy : Eastern and Western, p. 443.
8. Max Bense : What is Existence—Philosophy ?, trans. by Ram Adhar Mall, p. xlv, Indian Universities Press, 1967.

not depend upon past conventions for its support. He observes, "Existentialism is nothing else but an attempt to draw the full conclusions from a consistantly atheistic position. Its intention is not in the least that of plunging men into despair. And if by despair one means as the Christians do—any attitude of unbelief, the despair of the existentialists is something different. Existentialism is not atheist in the sense that it would exhaust itself in demonstrations of the non-existence of God. It declares, rather, that even if God existed that would make no difference for its point of view. Not that we believe God does exist; but we think that the real problem is not that of His existence, what man needs is to find himself again and to understand that nothing can save him from himself, not even a valid proof of the existence of God. In this sense existentialism is optimistic, it is a doctrine of action, and it is only by self-deception, by confusing their own despair with ours that Christians can describe us as without hope."[9]

Existentialism is not a philosophy but a fountain-head of several widely different revolts against traditional philosophy. "The refusal to belong to any school of thought, the repudiation of the adequacy of any body of beliefs whatever, and specially of systems, and a marked dissatisfaction with traditional philosophy as superficial, academic and remote from life-that is the heart of existentialism."[10] Whatever may be the facts behind it, certain burning problems and motives which flow and flourish along this current of thought, should be studied impartially and sympathetically. Existential thinkers' entering into truth involves them in a profound self-examination and this is why these men so often produce plays, novels, journals, fugitive essays or meditations. In fact, it accuses all objective philosophies of divorcing reason from life by trying to evade such human polarities as freedom and des-

9. Sartre: Existentialism and Humanism, p. 56.
10. Kaufman, Felix : Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, p. 12.

tiny, anxiety and courage, isolation and community, guilt and forgiveness, instead of recognizing that these polarities must remain perpetually at the very centre of vital thinking.

Firstly, it is a protest against all forms of rationalism, which find it easy to assume that reality can be grasped primarily or exclusively by intellectual means. Secondly, in this sphere of philosophical theory, existentialism stands against mechanism and naturalism; and in the sphere of social theory it stands against all patterns of human organization in which the mass mentality stifles the spontaneity and uniqueness of the individual person. Thirdly, existentialism makes a drastic distinction between subjective and objective truth, and it gives priority to the former against the latter. In the fourth place, existentialism regards man as fundamentally ambiguous. This is very closely linked with his predominant stress on freedom. It sees the human situation as filled with contradiction and tension which cannot be resolved by means of exact or consistant thinking, From top to bottom, as it were, man is a contradictory creature. Viewed from outside, he is but an episode in the vast process of nature. Viewed from inside, each man is a universe to himself. Finally, stress upon freedom can lead towards either faith in God or downright atheism. Thus existentialism has produced both the most penetrating forms of Christian faith and the most nihilistic types of human self-assertion. "Subjectivism, intuitionism, romanticism and even hyper-emotionalism of different types find free and spontaneous mānifestation in the writings of most existentialists. The existentialists are frankly and consciously opposed to all metaphysical speculations regarding ultimate things carried on through intellectual concepts and symbols, that cannot penetrate beneath the common husk of reality. Like that of all mystics, their honest motto is *to be* (to exist) rather than *to know*."[11] In this way, "Existentialism begins as a voice raised

11. D. M. Datta : The Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy, The University of Calcutta, Third Edition 1970, pp. 509, 510.

in protest against the absurdity of Pure Thought, a logic which is not the logic of thinking but the immanent movements of Being. It recalls the spectator of all time and of all existence from the speculations of Pure Thought to the problems and possibilities of his own conditioned thinking as an existing individual seeking to know how to live and to live the life he knows."[12] Existentialism is not concerned with points of school doctrine but with the recall of philosophy to the existing individual striving to live in the light of reflection. The rejection of a transcendent view without perspective, and recall to the self-created by its choice and projects and consolidated by commitment and fidelity, as the starting-point of personal reality and the condition of all knowledge, evaluation, and good, is the fundamental position of existentialism. The existing individual thinker realising his possibilities is the real, and the current of reality flows through him in virtue of his individuality : he joins the real beyond himself not in an act of thought, but in thoughtful acts. Now, the individual is not a quite solitary person in the vast desert but he has to maintain his relations with the existing society too. Sartre clarifies the position : "And when we say that man is responsible for himself, we do not mean that he is responsible only for his own personality; but that he is responsible for all men."[13] Further he explains that only existentialism can present a portrait of such a life where individual along with his environment in his varied forms can be seen together. "Existentialism, in our sense of the word, is a doctrine that does render human life possible, a doctrine also which affirms that every truth and every human action imply both an environment and a human subjectivity.[14] Sartre emphatically declares that man is the foremost living creature. "We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself,

12. H. J. Blackham, Six Existential Thinkers, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., Broadway House, Carter Lane, London, 1967, p. 2.
13. Sartre : Existentialism and Humanism, p. 29.
14. Ibid., p. 24.

surges up in the world and defines himself afterwards".[15]

Life is a selection among many adverse situations, struggles and upheavals. Man shapes his personality with the stuffs he collects from different directions and resources. He defines life himself as Sartre observes : "I am thus responsible for myself and for all men, and I am creating a certain image of man as I would have him be. In fashioning myself I fashion man."[16] And he further suggests, "What I choose is always the better and nothing can be better for us unless it is better for all."[17] The nature of the values which impersonal disharmony promotes and the arguments by which the existentialists support their position, have greatly emphasised human relationship. Sartre says that our 'being-for-others' is very bit as fundamental as our 'being-for-ourselves', that the one dimension of our being has "equal dignity" with the other. The concept of being-with (Mitsein) is one of the most crucial in Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Jaspers writes : "The individual cannot become human by himself. Self-being is only real in communication with another self-being, Alone, I sink into gloomy isolation—only in communication with others can I be revealed.[18]" Along with humanism, the existentialists have laid due emphasis upon the significance of interpersonal relationship for the individual. The existentialists, unlike Descartes never doubted the existence of others. They are as certain of existence of others as they are of their own existence. Any theory which fails to explain our intuitive, non-reflective certainty of the existence of others is for that very reason inadequate. "My resistance to solipsism" says Sartre, "...proves that I have always known that the other existed, that, I have always had a total though implicit compre-

15. Ibid., p. 28.
16. Quoted by E. L. Allen in Existentialism from Within, p. 81.
17. Sartre : Existentialism and Humanism, p. 29.
18. Karl Jaspers : "On My Philosophy", trans. by Felix Kaufmann, published in Kaufmann ed., Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, p. 147.

hension of his existence, that this "pre-ontological" comprehension comprises a surer and deeper understanding of the nature of the Other and the relation of his being to my being than all the theories which have been built around it.[19]" My being-for-others, is simultaneous with my being-for-myself and can never be grasped reflectively. "The other can exist for us in two forms : If I experience him with self-evidence, I fail to know him; if I know him (reflectively).... I only reach his being-as-object."[20] Similarly, I can experience my own being-for-others non-reflectively in shame and pride, but I cannot know it as I can know my facticity by the impersonal methods of logic and science. Second, my past was founded by my freedom; I chose my past and am responsible for it because I chose it. Because of these two important differences we are far more radically alienated from our being-for-others than from our facticity. "My original fall", says Sartre, "is the existence of the other. Shame-like pride—is the apprehension of myself as a nature although that very nature escapes me and is unknowable as such."[21]

Existentialism in Historical Perspective :

Prof. Radhakrishnan holds that Existentialism is a new name for an ancient method. The Upaniṣads and Buddhism insist on a knowledge of the self : ātmānam viddhi. They tell us that man is a victim of ignorance (avidyā), which breeds selfishness. This feeling of distress is universal. A sense of blankness overtakes the seeking spirit, which makes a world a waste and life a vain show. Man is not a final resting-place. He has to be transcended. Man can free himself from sorrow and suffering, by becoming aware of the eternal. This awareness, this enlightenment is what is called jñāna or bodhi.[22]

According to Reinhart, the seeds of existentialism were

19. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 251.
20. Ibid., p. 302.
21. Ibid., p. 263.
22. S. Radhakrishnan : History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western, p. 443.

present in the philosophy of Heraclitus and Socrates. In 1870, Nietzsche said that every philosophical speculation, however imaginative and superfluous, contains some elements of truth which reveals some specific aspects of the philosopher's personality. History of Greek philosophy, according to Nietzsche, should be written from personal and existential viewpoint. He also discovered the elements of existentialism in the philosophy of Heraclitus. The main problem before Horaclitus was self-analysis or consciousness of human existence. Like Augustine, he was more interested in the perfection of man rather than in consciousness and knowledge. He held that the soul of a philosopher is related to the "Eternal Fire' through which alone divine knowledge dawns upon him. Heraclitus's cosmology and theology have also been influenced by his anthropological ideas. For Heraclitus, human heart is a centre of powerful feelings and activities in which all the potentialities of creation emerge and merge. According to Heraclitus, knowledge of the 'Logos' can be attained only through insight. Universal law is omniscient and independent. The knowledge of Universal principle tells us that all the events of the universe are manifestations of ever-changing Fire. Though Heraclitus recognises Flux, he also believes in eternal harmony. Thus 'the change is ruled by an unchaning law'. Anthropoligical ideas of Heraclitus, like the existential humanism of Jean-Paul Sartre, teach us that man can work out his salvation through his personal efforts, since insight does not mean only intellect but it also acts as the universal rational principle. Though man is subject to ever-chaning laws of Nature, he is free inasmuch as he can transcend himself. We see that the method of philosophical enquiry of Socrates was also existential. That is why Kierkegaard has showered praise on him. The main contribution of Socrates is that he laid emphasis on the existence of philosopher himself and asserted that he must acquire the knowledge of self. It can be said that Socrates was the first man to propagate rhe existential way of thinking. He had perfectly identified his personal life with his ideas.

Plato and Aristotle are the two main pillars of Greek philosophy. No philosophical system is untouched by the thoughts of these two great philosophers. If essence and existence are two main centres of philosophical enquiry, Plato attached great importance to essence whereas Aristotle laid stress on existence. The existentialist position is in a sense similar to that of Plato, in so far as they held that the particular existents are in no way connected with universal essence. They posit the world of existence to the exclusion of that of essence. Aristotle points out that it is not justifiable to consider ideas or essences to be those existing apart from the particular existents. For "by essence we surely mean the inherent nature, from which the apparent properties of a thing are derived; but the idea is, by definition, not inherent; it is placed apart and particular things are said to aspire towards it or participate in it in varying degrees. There are really metaphors which explain nothing."[23] According to Aristotle, then, form divorced from matter, is inconceivable. The form of a table, for instance, is inseparable from its matter, i. e., something of which it is made. It is thus a complex of form and matter, and is, as such, concrete. Each such substance is an individual. The same form inscribed on matter which is relatively featureless "can only produce a number of identical individuals." Aristotle implies that, "in the animate world, the Form or Soul which combines with the body to produce a living being is *individual*. It is not a mere general concept, like humanity or caninity, and so the question, whence comes the residue of personal characteristics does not arise".[24] Thus the very living being, including man, is a concrete

23. D. J. Allen : The Philosophy of Aristotle; Oxford University Press, London, New York, Toronto, 1952; The Home University Library, p. 19. Quoted in Sailesh Ranjan Bhattacharya : An Enquiry into the Fundamentals of Existentialism, Firma Klm Private Ltd., Calcutta, p. 8.
24. D. J. Allen : The Philosophy of Aristotle, p. 42, Quoted in Sailesh Ranjan Bhattacharya : An Enquiry into the Fundamentals of Existentialism, p. 8.

individual, it is soul embodied—a complex of form and matter. Matter is therefore, as Aristotle maintains, the principle of individuation.[25] Thus "the world is composed of individuals, no two of whom are precisely alike..."[26] Aristotle, however, speaks about pure forms, (i. e., forms devoid of matter), existing in the heavenly region; but so far as his view about the sublunary region is concerned, it seems that he, like the existentialists, lays a considerable emphasis on the concrete individuals existing in the physical world.

Aristotle's view about the sublunary things has some direct bearings on the existential conception of man. Existentialists, like Aristotle, emphasise concrete individual existents. Everything in nature, as Aristotle contends, is a complex of form and matter which are inseparable from one another. The existentialists maintain that man as an existing being cannot be a mere concept. He is a concrete individual, a psycho-physical being; he is consciousness embodied.

St. Thomas Acquinas maintains with Aristotle that every physical object is constituted by form and matter which are practically inseparable, though distinguishable in thought. Humanity exists not in a state of abstraction, but in an individualised state. In short, for St. Thomas Acquinas, as for Aristotle, the universal exists as embodied in each and every member of a class, and matter is the principle of individuation. He also maintains with Aristotle that there is an indeterminate 'matter' (formless matter) capable of acquiring any form, while the form inherent in it is the principle determining the class it belogns to. Matter as such is the substratum or foundation of all change; and this is what St. Thomas calls 'prime matter'. "St. Thomas thus accepts the Aristotlian doctrine of the hylomorphic composition of material substance, defining prime matter as pure potentiality and substantial form as the first act of a physical body, 'first act' meaning the principle which places the body in its specific class and determi-

25. Vide David Ross : Aristotle, p. 169.

26. D. L. Allen : The Philosophy of Aristotle, p. 42.

nes its essence."[27] So far as the relation between 'existence' and 'essence' is concerned, St. Thomas holds that none of them is prior to the other. They are created together and they determine each other. "Existence determines essence in the sense that it is act and through it the essence has being; but on the other hand existence, as act, is determined by essence, as potentiality, to be the existence of this or that kind of essence."[28] Thomist view of 'existence' and 'essence' has no direct bearing on Existentialism. Gilson and M. Merritan went to the extent of saying that only Thomism is the authentic existential philosophy.[29] We have seen that for St. Thomas, the essence is the form potential in a substance—material or immaterial. The form, again, is the act which makes possible actualization of what the substance potentially is. And this act of actualization of potentiality is what St. Thomas calls existence. Now, God being the pure form or pure Act, has no essence potential in Him; therefore He is existence as such, and is the unchangeable Reality. He makes all change possible in the finite world by creating essence and existence simultaneously. "In God alone, insists St. Thomas, are essence and existence identical; God exists necessarily because His essence is existence : all other things receive or 'participate in' existence, and that which receive must be distinct from that which is received."[30] The existentialist, however, differs with the Thomist in respect of his view about 'essence'. For him, the essence is never created by God, it is rather made up by the person concerned. Unlike St. Thomas, the existentialists do not admit that 'existence' and 'essence' are created together, and that none of them is prior to the other. 'Existence precedes essence' is the

27. Frederick Copleston, S. J. : A History of Philosophy, vol. 2, Part II; Image Books, A Division of Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, New York, 1962, p. 46.
28. Ibid., p. 53.
29. Gilson and M. Merritan : Christianity and Existentialism, p. 30.
30. Frederick Copleston : op. cit., p. 52.

foundation of Existentialism. It will be in order here to mention Duns Scotus's emphasis on individual being. He called the individual of each being, *haecceitas*. *Haecceitus* constitutes the individual or the singular entity.[31] Little did Scotus realise that, in the hands of a sensitive follower, this central concept could lead to a stark existentialist position. The English poet G. M. Hopkins came to the conclusion that he found the taste of his own being quite unique and incommunicable to others.[32]

Glimpses of existentialism can be seen in the philosophy of Kant. Kant held that, instead of being a machine, man is primarily a conscious being. His practical reason is a kind of intuition. According to Bertrand Russel, Kant and Leibnitz replanted the uprooted tree of Christianity. According to Kant, the concept or the essence cannot be the same as existence. For him, it is not possible to derive 'existence' from 'essence' or concept. It virtually makes no difference to speak about the concept or thought of the same thing as existing. Thus the concept of a hundred real dollars is not anything more than that of a hundred possible dollars; because each of them is obviously a concept having no existential import whatever. There can, then, be no mental picture of the existence of a thing. Existence, in other words, can in no way be mentally represented. It is important to note that Kierkegaard holds exactly the same view about the matter. Like Kant he maintains that 'existence' is not a concept or a predicate, "because it is too dense, rich and concrete to be represented adequately in any mental picture. My existence is not a mental representation but a fact in which I am plunged up to the ears, and indeed over the head."[33] This is, perhaps, the reason why

31. C. R. S. Harris : Dun Scotus Vol. I (New York : The Humanities Press, 1959, pp. 244-45.
32. C, Devlin, S. J. : ed. Sermons and Devotional Writings of Gerard Manley Hopkins, Oxford, 1959.
33. William Barret : Irrational Man; Heinemann Ltd., London-Melborne-Toronto, 1971, p. 264.

existentialists posit existence before essence.

The position of Hegel in connection with the present issue is quite noteworthy. In his 'absolute Idealism' existence can be derived from essence. Reality is the absolute Thought or Idea pregnant with the 'world of finite spirits' and 'the world of Nature'. The absolute is the 'essence' of all essences in the sense that it is comprehensive of all the finite essences or ideas each of which stands for a finite set of concrete particular existents—living or non-living. Absolute Thought or Reason, being ultimate Reality, is an absolutely independent principle and as such it freely transforms itself into 'the world of spirits' and that of concrete existents—'the world of Nature'. It is free, because "reason is its own reason. It is, by its very conception self-explanatory and self-determined."[34] Ultimate Reality can be proved or disproved by reason alone. The Absolute Thought or Reason, being essentially spiritual, is inclusive of all finite spirits. "The Idea which is independent or for itself, when viewed on the point of its unity with itself, is Perception or Intuition, and the percipient Idea is Nature. But as Intuition the Idea is an external 'reflection'. Enjoying, however, an absolute liberty, the Idea does not merely pass over into life, or as finite cognition allow life to show in it in its absolute truth it resolves to let the moment of its particularity, or of the first characterization and other being, the immediate idea, as its reflected image, go forth freely as Nature."[35] This is how Hegel derives 'existence' from 'esssence'.

Existentialist interpretation of 'existence' owes its origin to Husserl's view that consciousness is essentially intentional, that it refers beyond itself to things other-than itself. His field of consciousness is not to be conceived as something separate from

34. W. T. Stace : The Philosophy of Hegel, Dover Publication INC, 1955, p. 59.

35. William Wallace : The Logic of Hegel, to from " The Encyclopaedia of Philosophical Sciences" (Hegel) : Oxford University Press, Humphry Milford 2nd ed.. 1892, p. 379.

his body. He is a concrete individual existing in the world. According to Existentialism, man is neither a physiological structure to which consciousness has been annexed, nor is he essentially a spiritual being. He is a concrete psycho-physical individual in his totality of being. For them, there is no Cartesion wall between body and mind. In Husserl, the Cartesion wall becomes transparent. Consciousness, he opines, necessarily points beyond itself. It transcends itself; that is to say, it refers to things other than itself. It is, in other words, essentially intentional. And there is no need of a God "Who guarantees that mind corresponds with things",[36] for self-transcendence or intentionality is "the central characteristic of consciousness."[37] For the existentialists, there is not even a transparent wall between body and mind. We are not creatures enclosed in the sphere of conciousness. Man is, on the other hand, directly exposed to the environment. His very existence necessarily involves the whole world; he exists in the world. Husserl, however, goes further in order to relate them together. He says that it is possible to 'bracket' or 'disconnect'[38]—the essential being without denying the empirical world of existents. It appears, therefore, that for Husserl, the world of essence as 'bracketed' or disconnected'[39] may be incompatible, .with the world of existence, yet the latter may remain with the former; because, Husserl considers the world of corporeal existents to be the empirical counterpart of the world of essence; or in other words, pure essence is exemplified in the concrete existents. Husserl seems to agree with the existentialists in so far as he makes a separa-

36. William Barret : New York & Henery D. Aiteen; Harward University : Philosophy in the Twentieth Century—An Anthology; Vol. 3, Part iv, Random House, New York, Ist ed., 1962, p. 135.
37. Ibid., p. 135.
38. Edmund Husserl : Ideas. trans. by Boyce Gilson, London, Allen & Unwin Ltd., 4th Impression, 1967, p. 108.
39. Ibid., p. 109.

tion between 'existence' and 'essence'. But whether he admits with the existentialists that 'existence' precedes essence, is yet to be decided, It is found on analysis that Husserl emphasises essence in so far as he maintains that pure essence is exemplified in the date of experience. This implies that concrete individual existents are but instances of pure essence. In his 'Phenomenology' which he defines as a theory of pure or essential Being, dealing only "with the transcendentally reduced phenomena,"[40] he strongly affirms that the essential Being is indubitable. The act of doubting is impossible, unless we are assured of the existence of what we doubt. The real Being of a concrete existent lies, not in its corporeality, but in its essence. The essential Being is what a thing really is : it is the thing itself—the "real" object which has to be "bracketed".[41] This is, however, no reason, why we should altogether deny the corporeal objects of empirical intuition. Whatever be his view about the individual existents, he speaks for the priority of 'essence' over 'existence'.

Heidegger, a pupil of Husserl, derives from his master's 'doctrine of essential self-transcendence of consciousness', his "own interpretation of human existence in terms of the basic etymology of the word : to ek-sist means to stand beyond oneself. As a creature open to the future and enmeshed in the world and its cares, man always stands beyond himself."[42] And that is why, man alone exists. "Existentialism", then "is a philosophy that comfronts the human situation in its totality to ask what the basic conditions of human experience are and how man can establish his own meaning out of those conditions. Its method is to begin with this human existence as a fact without any ready-made pre-conceptions about the *essence* of man. There is no pre-fabricated human nature that freezes human possibilities into a pre-ordained mold, on the contrary,

40. Ibid., p. 44.
41. Ibid., p. 264.
42. Ibid., p. 135.

man exists first and makes himself what he is out of the conditions into which he is thrown. 'Existence precedes essence', as the formula puts it."[43]

We can trace the beginning of existential thought in modern times in the philosophy of Pascal (1623-1662). He took keen interest in the problems of human existence. For him knowledge of self was more existential than the knowledge of science. He lamented the predetermined and unsubstantial nature of human existence in this vast universe and willed it otherwise. The realization of contingency of human existence is indicative of existential way of thinking.

Kierkegaard revolted against the old concept and declared that 'existence' cannot be represented in concept, "because it is too dense, concrete and rich. I am; and this fact that I exist is so compelling and enveloping a reality that it cannot be reproduced thinly in any of my mental concepts, though it is clearly the life-and-death fact without which all my concepts would be void."[44] He points out that 'Existence' as such and 'the thought of Existence' are not the same. The fact that 'I exist' does not imply 'I think, I exist'. Because I must exist, in order that I may think that I exist. It may be said that "if existence cannot be a concept, then quite clearly it cannot be reduced to essence, nor can priority for essence over existence may be claimed."[45] Then, again, if thought as the objective reality be identical with being, an actually existing being becomes identical with his thought of himself. But this is sheer tautology, "because this being which is ascribed to the thinker does not signify that he is, engaged in thinking...The existing subject, on the other hand, is engaged in existing, which is indeed the case with every human being."[46] My existence as

43. Ibid., p. 143.
44. William Barret : Irrational Man, 1961, p. 144.
45. Ibid., p. 265.
46. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (trans.by)-Concluding Unscientific Postscript to the "Philosophical Fragments",

an individual human being is not, then, anything to be mirrored in the concept of my mind, nor is it a matter for speculation; it is rather "a reality in which I am personally and passionately involved...I encounter it in life; it is my life, a current flowing invisibly around all my mental mirrors."[47] It may be pointed out that although Kierkegaard's attempt is a revolt against the entire Platonic tradition, against all those who maintain that 'essence' is prior to 'existence', it is worth-mentioning that Kierkegaard is a thiest. He has an unflinching devotion to Christianity. As to what an existing individual should make of himself, Kierkegaard says that *either* an individual may live as an ordinary man, *or* he may lead an ethico-religious life.

Jean-Paul Sartre who has taken existentialist's revolt to its zenith welcomes this epoch-making maxim as the foundation of Existentialism. He especifically asks : "What do we mean by saying that existence precedes essence ? We mean," as he himself answers, "that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up the world—and defines himself afterwards."[48] The meaning behind existence is to establish value. In support of his thesis he further observes : "Man simply is. Not that he is simply what he conceives himself to be, but he is what he wills, and he conceives himself after already existing....Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism."[49] By 'essence' Sartre means "what has been". Sartre calls it "man's past. Since there is no pre-established pattern for human nature, each man makes his essence as he lives."[50] Sartre has no confidence in traditional

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Princeton University Press and American-Scandinavian Foundation : Cf. 'A Kierkegaard Anthology', edited by Robert Bretall, Princeton University Press, 1946, p. 206.

47. William Barret : Irrational Man, p. 145.
48. J. P. Sartre : Existentialism and Humanism, trans. by Philip Mairet, Matheun & Co. Ltd., London, 1957, p. 28.
49. Ibid., p. 28.
50. Sartre : Being & Nothingness, p. 772.

and outworn meaning and value of human existence. He attaches importance to the dignity of human activities. According to him, a person appears before us exactly as what he makes of himself. His appearance is his essence. "The appearance does not hide the essence, it reveals it; it *is* the essence. The essence of an existent is no longer a property sunk in the cavity of this existent; it is the manifest law which presides over the succession of its appearance; it is the principle of the series."[51]

Sociological Approach of Existential Predicament

The chief characteristic of existential thinkers is resistance. The uprising of democracy and socialism attached too much importance to the crowd and the individual was lost sight of. The existential philosophers opposed the conspiracy of collectivism to negate man and tried to re-establish the individual in society and the universe in their different ways. Kierkegaard attacks the principle of equality of all human beings—the corner stone of democracy and socialism : "Here he protests against the levelling brought about by the phantom of public opinion, ascendancy of the mass and the mass-man, socialism and demon of collectivism..."[52] Jaspers protested against the machinery of welfare state which dissolves the individual in the crowd. Marcel opposed the socialisation of man and the dictatorship of the state. Most of the existentialists of France were active members of the organizations which fought against the oppression and exploitation of the Nazi. Thus the existentialists are the philosophers of liberation rather than of independence. The soul of man is groaning under the yoke of society, state and dictatorship. The liberation of man from the bondage of external forces is the essence of existentialism. The realization of man's own freedom can alone lead to liberation (Sartre). That

51. Ibid., Introduction, p. iv.
52. F. H. Heinemann : Existentialism and Modern Predicament, Harper & Row, Publishers, New York and Evanston, 1958, p. 34.

is why they imparted new dimensions of value, to the philosophy of freedom (Berdyaev). Existentialism, in its various forms, is a philosophy of crisis because it has given vivid expression to the dilemma of human existence. Alienation, born of the crisis of modern life, is the very basis of existentialism and pervades all human relations. Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky and Kafka lived like outsiders, an insecure life, in the society which produced them. The impending spiritual crisis prophasised by them became the central cause of modern social and political restlessness.

The sociologists have viewed this problem from a different angle. P. Sorokin, in his book, "*Crisis of Our Age*" has described modern malady as "Crisis of Sentient Culture". He has analysed the historical civilizations of Greece and Europe and inferred that sentient culture inevitably leads to wars and bloody revolutions. If the sickness at the very centre of our being is not transformed into an "ideational culture", then there is no hope for humanity. Sorokin calls it "Pathological Culture." Sorokin has drawn a graphic picture of the upheaval and restlessness of modern society, sighing and meaning under the pernicious atmosphere of scientific development which consequently erected a platform for existential revolt. "...every important aspect of the life, organization, and the culture of Western society is in the extra-ordinary crisis... Its body and mind are sick and there is hardly a spot on its body which is not sore, nor any nervous fibre which functions soundly...We are seemingly between two epochs : the dying Sensate culture of our magnificient yesterday and the coming Ideational culture of the creative tomorrow. We are living, thinking, and acting at the end of a brilliant six-hundred-year-long Sensate day. The oblique rays of the sun still illumine the glory of the passing epoch. But the light is fading, in the deepening shadows it becomes more and more difficult to see clearly and to orient ourselves safely in the confusions of the twilight. The night of the transitory period begins to loom before us, with its nightmares, frightening shadows, and heart-rendering horrors.

Beyond it, however, the dawn of a new great Ideational culture is probably waiting to greet the man of the future."[53] Historically, philosophy has had major influences on the development of the important forms of social thought. Enlightenment philosophy had a profound impact on Durkheimian sociology, and the philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey had a great effect on the sociology of Max Weber. The philosophical writings of Edmund Husserl, Henery Bergson, William James, and others had a great influence upon the thoughts of the early American pragmatists and now remain a source of inspiration for the more recently developed phenomenological sociologies, such as ethnomethodology.

Existential sociology not only presents a glorious definition of its subject-matter, theoretical paradigm, or set of assumptions about proper scientific methods, but is also busy with the goal of understanding man in society and assessing the total man in his total natural social environment.[54] The functionalists were aware that all the aspects of human subjective experience existed and often aspired to grant them some importance. Parson (1951), for example, argued that cognition and effect (i. e., thought and feeling) are both important aspects of an actor's orientation to any situation. They were concerned with explaining the patterns of action, as the result of the third component of action-orientation—valuation. Values, or rules, were the fundamental independent, causal variables for the functionalists. As Durkheim put it : "Society is a moral phenomenon". Durkheim believes that values must dominate and control human emotions or else society is destroyed (social disintegration results) or the individual himself is destroyed. Parson emphatically argues that the values of society determine whether affect is allowed to be relevant to the situation (values specify either "affective involvement" or "affective

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53. P. Sorokin : Sociological and Cultural Dynamics, New York, 1937, Vol. III, p. 535.
54. Existential Sociology : Edited by Jack D. Dougles And John M. Johnson, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. 4.

neutrality"). When feelings dominate values, there is a failure of "boundary maintainance". In the eyes of functionalists, society becomes synonymous with value patterns as social structure or social system was defined in terms of values.[55]

The phenomenological philosophers and sociologists marched hand in hand, but arrived at different independent conclusions. Husserl's phenomenology was the philosophy of consciousness or intention. Explicitly, it was a philosophy, not of a world out there ("being-in-itself"), but of how that presumed world is consciously experienced by man and how man experiences himself. But there was also an implicit assumption in this definition of purpose that proved valuable in the whole phenomenological tradition. Conscious, meaningful, intentional experience was the focus of phenomenology. Thus it appears that each theory recognises the existence of other causes; but each theory is fundamentally monocausal. The utilitarians in economics and sociology saw rational calculations of personal gain as the basic cause. The structural functionalists replaced these causes with values or norms. Man remained monolithic, essentially symbolic, generally rational, and, in one way or the other, determined. We live for feelings. The primary and ultimate dominance of feeling in our lives has led some existentialists to view man's life as ultimately irrational. They follow Tertullian in their rebellion against reason : "Credo quia absurdum" ("I believe (it) because it is absured"). Even the balanced Unamuno asserted : "Hegel made famous his aphorism that all the rational is real and all the real rational; but there are many of us who, unconvinced by Hegel, continue to believe that the real, the really real is irrational, that reason builds upon irrationalities."[56] William Barret (1962) has tried to capture the massive, multifaceted existential rebellion with the image of irrational man. But this supposed irrationalism of

55. Ibid., p. 7.

56. Unamuno, Nigue De : The Tragic Sense of Life, trans, by Crawford Flitch, London : Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1954, p. 5.

the existentialists is a gross exaggeration resulting from their angry, rebellious denunciation of the over-rationalized concepts of classic, positivist, and scientific thinkers. William James was carried by this conflict against reason. But he was no more a man who thought with his blood, than Nietzsche was an intentional unleasher of the Nazi Superman or Merleau-Ponty a total devotee of unbriddled passions and momentary feelings. As Barret has rightly argued, existential thinkers were above all interested in re-establishing concern with the whole man as he lives in his world. "Both Marxism and Positivism are, intellectually speaking, relies of the nineteenth-century Enlightenment that have not yet come to terms with the shadow side of human life as grasped even by some of the nineteenth-century thinkers themselves. The Marxist and Positivist picture of man, consequently, is thin and over-simplified. Existential philosophy, as a result, as such over-simplification attempts to grasp the image of the whole man, even when this involves bringing to consciousness all that is dark and questionable in his existence. And in just this respect, it is a much more authentic expression of our own contemporary experience."[57] Existential thought, from philosophy and literature to the social sciences, is grounded in, and systematically analyses, the whole existence of man; it attempts to provide guidance to the expression, gratification, fulfilment, and growth of these desires of man to-day.

In opposition to Marxism, existentialism laid too much emphasis on existence and morality; so much so that it hardly leaves any room for social philosophy. Though Sartre accepts social relation of man with man, he interprets human relationship in terms of self. In view of these contentions, evolution of genuine social relationship does not appear to be plausible. The 'communication' of Jaspers also becomes formal and vague. Even then existentialism presents an absolutely different kind of social philosophy. The other basic source of existential social philosophy can be traced in 19th century. Mill and Marx

57. William Barret : Irrational Man, p. 22.

pollarised the efforts of social reconstruction which culminated in Lenin and Dewey. But in addition to them, Nietzsche and Kierkegaard will also be called social philosophers because they were the critics of their age. Their main aim was to inspire man to oppose all the traditional and established social systems, whether of religion or of irrational morality of the mob. On the contrary, liberal democratic social philosophy of Dewey and Marxism of Lenin are great possibilities in reconstruction of future human society. Dewey laid stress on the scientific reconstruction of human society through the establishment of community, whereas Lenin conceived social harmony on the basis of the equality of the proletariat born of the class-struggle. Both the thinkers present a definite social structure for the posterity. Therefore, the revaluation of modern society becomes essential for the reconstruction of future society. But Kierkegaard and Nietzsche are the two main sources of contemporary existential social philosophy. Existentialism is a social philosophy inasmuch as it criticises the society, though it does not have any concrete shape of society to come. If criticism of society is the criterion of social philosophy, existentialist philosophers differ widely in their way of criticizing the society. The existentialists can be divided into two classes in view of the above contention—(i) Theist and (ii) Atheist. Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel and Kierkegaard come under the first category. Their criticism is not hostile but mild. The second category is represented by the revolutionary existentialist philosophers, like Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Simmone D. B. and Camu. The disparity between these two view-points is reflected in the contradictory ideas of Marcel and Simmone D. B. Marcel said that, according to Simone De Beauvoir, ordinary crimes against law and order should not be dealt with too severely but political crimes are unparadonable. Marcel did not recognize any kind of crime and his view was transformed into a conviction after he came to know the disorder, cruelty and horror of the French Revolution. In her book '*The Ethics of Ambiguity*' Simmone D. B. has evaluated the practical results of violence born of

political crimes in the particular context of data of the Russian population and has drawn the same interesting conclusions.

The industrial society attaches undue importance to production of commodities, and, in this process man himself is reduced to commodity and ultimately he is forced to become the machine itself. The liberal existentialists are really sore at this unfortunate devaluation and deformation of human existence. The mechanical life guided by the iron hands of a clock is hostile to the sentiments of man. Marcel wants the deliverance of man from the social situation fraught with the problems of physical needs, and re-establishment of man's true existence. Involment of man in his own existence is the fundamental principle of human life; and here birth, death and love cease to be mechanical data, and they are transformed into a mystery with which man is emotionally integrated. Jaspers is also impressed by the conflict between collective social order and the genuine requirements of human life. The life of man is governed by definite laws for which control and organization alone are supreme. The traditional 'hero' has disappeared into the crowd. But at this juncture, the generosity of man alone can come to our rescue. We can conceive the Superman. This is what Kierkegaard and Nietzsche have done. In view of these thinkers, the crowd is a house of cards but there is also a place for reality of human feelings and emotions in it, which will enable man to unite himself with others by his personal loyalty. If the contemporary world has to give us anything, it is the contact of a man sufficient for himself and only such persons prove that generosity still persists in human relations and existence.

Never did Sartre oppose the revolution of the proletariat—what he opposed was the material justification of the revolution, because, inspite of our recognition of liberation, we are guided by the external forces, and therefore, we are subjected to determinism. As a matter of fact, human actions derive their value from freedom. Freedom is the first condition necessary for revolution. Obviously, his freedom is existential. But the

question arises : What can be moral existential justification for the violence inherent in the revolution of the proleteriat ? Sartre has no answer to the question. Nevertheless, he firmly believes that the revolution of the proletariat is bound to replace capitalistic exploitation fraught with bourgeoise hypocrisy and disorder. The existential theory of value does not give us any clear-cut picture of the alternative social order. The discovery of the values is nothing but groping in the dark. Political leanings spring from personal interest and therefore, they cannot be justified logically. That is why Sartre has never given expression to his political leanings in his works. The violence and oppression of Stalin roused many French thinkers, like Camu from their dogmatic infatuation with leftist. Sartre labelled Camu as an idealist and moralist in theoretical disputes; but he never tried to justify mass violence. This task was accomplished by his friend Simmone De Beauvoir who did not give any place to morality in the politics of violence.

The violence and bloodshed in the name of freedom may be justified in the field of politics; or may be validated theoretically in the process of historicity; but, as Camus has said, these political crimes which wear the mask of philosophy and pave the way for the coronation of murderers are not innocent but deliberate. Moreover, we can say that the absolute freedom advocated by existentialism is being misused for absolute anarchy. The name of Merleau-Ponty is also associated with the leftist revolutionary existentialism along with Sartre and Simmone De Beauvoir. In his book " *Humanism and Terror* ", Ponty has justified terror on humanistic grounds. According to him, violence becomes inevitable in the context of human situation. Ponty's statement : 'no body can either be a communist or non-communist' is very famous in France. It can be safely said that Sartre and Ponty, after thorough analysis of human existence, could not oppose Marxism; nor could they, inspite of their faith in class-struggle, support it whole-heartedly. Merleau-Ponty could not remain indifferent to liberal ideals of democracy. The important role for Ponty was to

reinterpret Marxism in order to accomodate human values and to expose the difference between theory and practice in Democracy. Extentialism is in conflict with politics not because it lays stress on the necessity of violence in politics, but because of the human sentiments and emotions expressed by it. According to Ponty, man's consciousness of his environment alone constitutes the essence of existentialism.

From Outsider to Absurd :

Analysis of alienation is essential to existentialism. The problem of 'outsider' springs from alienation which culminates into absurdity. Alienation is used more often in the sense of mental attitude and mental malady rather than that of philosophy in 20th century. But formerly it stood for the fall of man from divinity. In the philosophy, it has been called self-alienation. The alienated person loses his selfhood. Perhaps he tries to identify himself with his pristine form; and he feels alienated when he fails to do so. His personality is divided and the feeling of alienation ultimately precipitates mental malady, The external world is rendered hostile to him. According to Hegel, knowledge alone can reconcile man with the external world. In his dialectic,reason is supreme.

Marx gave a material basis to the spiritual alienation. Flourwach is the golden link between Hegel and Marx, He holds that man's alienation springs from his religious feeling, Marx believes that alienation originates from state which confers duality on man : the real man and the citizen. He thinks that man's alienation is physical, political and economic rather than spiritual, The material alienation of Marx manifested itself in institutional alienation. Human organizations, state, government, bureaucracy, political parties are all nameless impersonal powers which have suppressed the individual. Man is making fruitless effort to liberate himself from the bondage of these powers and his failure has resulted in wars, frustration, despondency and 'Angst'.

Alienation on intellectual plane culminates into absurdity.

There is no harmony between the individual and the society due to alienation because this world is not absurd but man himself, whose absurdity is projected into the world. Absurd is nothing but man's ideas, hopes and actions. The attempt to attribute meaning to human life is absurd because man's life is originally meaningless. Naturally, outstanding works of art and literature are absurd to-day since they are nothing but true expression of our age. Existentialism has interpreted the crisis of our age in terms of absurdity. The philosophy of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard began with the concept of the 'outsider'. In Sartre and Camus, the problem of outsider has been treated on intellectual level. Kierkegaard gives a religious background whereas Dostoevsky explains it in terms of crime.

Our age has often been called an age of relativism. Emile Durkheim, along with Westermarch, suggested that the facts of human behaviour were more important than ethical theories. William Graham Summer also contributed to the belief that moral values are relative inasmuch as moral judgements were described as non-rational manifestations of social forces. For Summer, morals are simply social customs which are more rigidly fixed and enforced than are such customs and styles in dress.[58] The belief that all values are relative holds then that all values become arbitrary and irrational. According to this view, there is no rational justification for any act that an individual does; to save a human life is as irrational as to commit murder. Sometimes this interpretation of relativism is used to justify one's own conduct, even if it harms other people. If all values are relative, and I "get my kicks" in a different way than you, then it is claimed that you have no right to object to my behaviour. Thus. "All values are relative" is often used as an emotive justification of any conduct whatsoever. As the hero of

58. William Graham Summer : Folkways : A Study of Sociological Importance of Usages, Manners, Customs, Mores and Morals, New York : The New American Library of World Literature, INC., 1960.

JOHN BARTH'S novel, 'The Floating Opera' puts it : "The reasons for which people assign value to things are always ultimately (though not necessarily immediate) arbitrary, irrational".[59] The theory of relativism is found in the contemporary Theatre of the Absurd. The plays of Samuel Becket, Eugene Ionesco, and Jean Genet reflect the breakdown of the belief in rationality and in the traditional Hebraic-Christian values. The drama of the absurd not only deals with the futility and uselessness of the ordinary activities of man, but also with the emptiness in man's heart resulting from the loss of the traditional values of Western Civilizations. In Beckett's *Waiting of Godot*, the main characters, Estragon, and Vladimir, carry on meaningless conversations in order to pass the time. Day after day they wait for Godot, who never arrives, and yet they continue to wait, despite the absurdity of their behaviour,

The drama of the absurd presents another aspect. The individuals face overwhelming horror in the face of the impossibility of really having authentic communication with any one else. In Ionesco's *'The Chairs'* an old married couple await the arrival of a distinguished crowd of people who have been invited to hear the message which the old man delivers at the end of his life. Obviously, both in form and content, this play shows the ultimate meaninglessness and absurdity of man's existence.[60] Jean Genet's plays attack the traditional values of Western Civilization. All of us are portrayed as actors playing roles, and each role is shown to be empty, absurd and meaningless.

Outsider is he who does not accept the pleasure and contentment of bourgeo society. He does not use the masks of aristocracy, philosophy, religion, culture and civilization and consi-

59. John Barth : The Floating Opera, New York : A Von Library Book, 1956, p. 216.
60. Engene Ioneseo : Four Plays : The Bold Soprans, The Lesson, Jaek or the Submission, The Chairs trans. by Donald M. Allen, New York : Grove Press, INC. 1958.

ders them inconsistent. His main characteristics are revelation of truth and profound insight. The outsider sees nothing but anarchy and disorder behind the apparent veil of order of bourgeo society. That is why, his attitude towards life becomes the negation of life. H. G. Wells in his books, *"Mind and its Tether'* & *'Country of the Blind'* has laid stress on the same negative attitude towards life. But his heroes have not raised the question of freedom. The fundamental question of freedom is raised by Henery Warbruce and Sartre in their novels *'The Hell'* and *'The Nausea'* respectively. The nameless hero of *'The Hell'* feels an urge to enjoy undefined freedom of seeing human body stripped of its externals. Therefore, the women who cover their nakedness become the symbol of freedom. The life of 'the outsider' moves round the pivot of his own emotions and dreams. Antoine Roquentin, the hero of Sartre analyses the negative aspect of freedom sitting in his room. The problem of 'the outsider' is fully manifested in Dostoevsky. The outsider does not believe in control and dispenses with uncertainty by accepting either of the two extremes of crime and renunciation. Thus we see that Dostoevsky treats the problem of 'the outsider' on a still higher plane. He believes that alienation springs from crime. The inter-connection between the absurd and man's loss of belief in the traditional values of the past was clearly expressed by Albert Camus in *The Myth of Sisyphus* : "A world that can be explained even with bad reasons is a familiar world. But, on the other hand, in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and delights, man feels an alien, a stranger, His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his acting, is properly the feeling of absurdity."[61]

The theatre of the absurd has rendered valuable service to the interpretation of the nature of human life as devoid of

61. Albert Camus : The Myth of Sisyphus, Penguin in Modern Classics, 1975, p. 13.

values. Human life is therefore senseless and meaningless. It makes attempt to force man to confront his life with full awareness of the reality of arbitrary and irrational choices. Through the medium and influence of modern drama society can be awakened from present conformism and moral insensibility. As Ionesco suggests here : "To tear ourselves away from the everyday, from habit, from mental laziness which hides from us the strangeness of reality, we must receive something like a real bludgeon blow."[62] The absurd was interpreted in different ways in existential philosophy. When Sartre calls existence absurd, he appears to combine two main contentions. The first is that things have no sufficient reason for being as they are and not otherwise. The second is that things are contingent and not necessary. Sartre and Camus are the propounder of the concept of 'absurd' in its various forms. They revealed the crisis of our age through the concept of 'the absurd'. The disintegrating values, loss of religious faith and war rendered human life meaningless and Camus raised the question : "If human life is meaningless, why should n't we commit suicide ?"

62. Engene Ionesco : "Discovering the Theatre", in Theatre in Twentieth Century, ed. by Robert W. Corrigan, New York; Grove Press, INC, 1958, p. 115.

CHAPTER-TWO

Existentialism in Relation to other Disciplines

[A] Existentialism and Literature

In academic circles, existentialism and so-called existentialists are looked upon with suspicion, if not with contempt. This is especially so because "as the world goes round, every treatise that dooms man to destruction, every novel whose characters are mad or every play that depresses without elevating is labelled 'so existential'. And hence 'existentialism comes to mean the shocking, the sordid or the obscene."[1] This damaging remark against existentialist literature cannot be accepted blindly. Literature, in broad sense, unfolds the manifold aspects of human life and existentialist literature views life in a different perspective. It reflects the meaninglessness and the bleak sterility of human existence. Though existentialism deepens the shadows and blots out the lights, it can be said to be a vision in the long darkness. In an article entitled "Existentialism and Modern French Novel", Robert Chapigny observes : "First of all it could be maintained that every work of literature is existential, if not existentialist. The critics of existentialism are wont to deplore its literary term. As a matter of fact, the existential reflection about men and things is not fundamentally different from a literary point of view, at least from the point of view of thinking novelists, dramatists and poets. Existentialist comments on literature and on artistic activity testify to a close relationship between existentialism and literature."[2]

In the case of existential literature, the starting point can be

1. Marjorie Grene : Dreadful Freedom, (Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 1.
2. Robert Chapigny : Existentialism and Modern French Novel, Thought, XXXI, (Autum, 1956), pp. 365-66.

traced in the nineteenth century to Dostoevsky. The narrator in Dostoevsky's 'Notes From Under Ground' says "I swear, gentlemen, that to be too conscious is an illness–a real thorough-going illness." This is the consciousness which makes a man different from a thing, a condition so fraught with the possibility of suffering, that it is not the human condition but the human malady par-excellence. He further asks curiously, "why suffering is the sole origin of consciousness," statement which can be put by the side of many sayings of the Lord Buddha. Writing on the existentialist novels, A. De Wallhems summarises the basic existentialist categories as "contingency, (tragic) necessity, (unlimited) freedom, loneliness and absurdity."[3] From the time immemorial, mankind has always been fascinated by the idea of making something out of nothing. Earliest philosophical debates on creative exnihilo and modern symposiums on creativity, reflect man's inclination to seek an abstract basis for life above or beyond the realities of his own troubled history. While existentialism emerges as an assault upon this type of thinking, the experience of nothingness animates almost every aspect of existential literature. Perhaps, in the most familiar example, Sartre's Roquentin discovers himself at the moment when the roots of a chestnut-tree and the familiar objects of the park in which he is seated melt suddenly into amorphous irrelevence. It takes something to witness nothing. Leaving an unlightened bourgeoise to face the worst, Roquentin chooses to quit the world, in his own words, "to drive existence out of me, to empty the moments of their fat, to wring them, to drive them to purify myself, to harden myself, to produce in short the sharp, precise sound of a saxophone note."[4] The reality of art, conveyed through the voice he hears singing, "some of these days" on a scratched photograph record, refers to a means of transcending the naked contingency he witnesses at the heart of

3. Universitaas I, 8, 1946. Article on "Der Roman der Existentialismus."
4. Jean-Paul Sartre : Nausea, Penguin Modern Classics, 1966, p. 248.

everyday life.[5] Despite his preference for a world of abstract categories where "circles and melodies retain their pure and rigid contours."[6] Roquentin represents a type of aliented protagonist whose affirmation of subjectivity is often confused with existential freedom. Roquentin's acute sense of meaninglessness Iris Murdoch writes, makes his look with clairvoyant amazement upon the bourgeoisie, past and present, of the town where he is living... To be outside she concludes, "often appears to have for Sartre a positive value. Gauguine and Rimband are minor saints in the existential calender for his reason."[7]

Like many other critics, Marxist George Lukacs conceives of the existential protogonist almost exclusively in these a-historical terms. His two-fold description of the literary outsider in "The Meaning of Contemporary Realism" helps further to clarify the distinction : "First, the hero is strictly confined within the limits of his own experience. There is not for him and apparently not for his creator-any pre-existent beyond his ownself, acting upon him or being acted upon by him. Secondly, the hero himself is without personal history. He is 'thrown-into-the-world' : meaninglessly unfathomable. He does not develop through contact with the world; he neither forms nor is formed by it. The only development in this literature is the gradual revelation of the human condition. Man is now what he has always been and always will be."[8] The demoniac rebel, urging us to go round in our own will rather than to go right in some one else's requires no sanction short of his own will to act. He remains by nature anti-social.

5. Lucio P. Ruotolo : Six Existential Heroes, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1973, p. 1.
6. Irish Murdoch : Sartre : Romantic Rationalist, (New Haren Conn, Yale University Press, 1959), p. 3.
7. Ibid., p. 6.
8. George Lucas : The Meaning of Contemporary Realism, Trans. from German by John and Neke Mander (London, Merlin Press, 1963), p. 21.

Murray Krieger, developing a conception of the existential hero based on Raskolnikov's premise in 'Crime & Punishment' that "all great men or even men a little out of common.... must from their very nature be criminals", suggests that such a protagonist maintains independence through an act of revenge directed against all absolute. "Hopelessly adrift from his or any other moorings, he can float into well-lessness and thus abdicate from tragic heroism, or he can surge toward the demoniac."[9]

Existential themes are discernible in the plays of Tennesses Williams, Arthor Miller, Armand Salacrou and Jeam Anouilh. Henry Ibsen was the first to experiment with a Kierkegaardian theme in his drama Brond (1866). Shakespeare's Hamlet is itself capable of interpretation as an existential play. Marjorie Grene makes such an interpretation in Dreadful Freedom. She utters; "Not only the disproportion of circumstances and action, moreover, but the disharmony of a genuine huminity and its conventional imitation may be called, in a sense, an 'existential' element in Hamlet....Hamlet's apparent madness, like Kierkegaard's irony, marks the final, irremediable split that is appearance only and the tragic reality which we find when we face ourselves unmasked."[10] The same critic finds 'existential' motifs in Dickens "Great Expectations" for,.... "the intimate relation of dead to the genesis and maintenance of a scheme of values is an 'existential' theme dramatically exemplified...in Great Expectations."[11] It is quite obvious that the existential outlook is "literary", and it can be shown to be present in any great writer who deals with the fundamental problems of life and destiny. Paul Tillich maintains that the existentialist point of view is present in most theology and much philosophy, art, and litereature, although this

9. Murray Kriegger : The Tragic Vision (New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), p. 13.
10. Marjorie Grene : Dreadful Freedom, op. cit., pp. 58-59.
11. Ibid., p. 60.

point of view is not often recognised.[12]

The existentialist seeks an escape from all the predicaments through human performance, but the performance provides no escape, since the performance is, above all, the height of contingency. The veil of ignorance which encompasses Kafka characters also encompasses Sartre's heroes. Brunet, in 'Iron in the soul' thinks to him. "It's true enough that I've got to work in the dark. But what alternative was there ?—to do nothing ?"[13] The existentialists find inaction intolerable in so far as it amounts to an abrogation of human freedom. The vision of the world has a dimension of depth where the thinkers look at the pathos of human existence. This can be said of the German poet Rilke, whose later works influenced Heidegger and whose work "The Notes of Malte Laurids Brigge" influenced Sartre. The human condition is described in the later work as follows : "We discover that we do not know our role; we look for a mirror; we want to remove our make up and take off what is false and be real. But somewhere a piece of disguise that we forgot still sticks to us. A trace of exaggeration remains in our eyebrows; we do not notice that the corners of our mouth are bent. And so we walk around, a mockery and a mere half : neither having achieved being nor actors."[14] Like Nietzsche, Rilke protests against the separation of thought and feeling. But unlike Sartre, Rilke believes in man's capacity to redeem existence, and, as a poet, he has sufficient anchorage in earthly things. Where Sartre gets bogged in facticity, Rilke can see beyond literality to the sanctity of the actual.[15]

Existentialist theory and practice in literature furnishes healthy platform for French literary polemics. In keeping with

12. Paul Tillich : The Courage to Be, (New Haven : Yele University Press, 1932), p. 126.
13. Sartre : Iron in the Soul, Penguin Ed., 1970, p. 289.
14. From Dostoevsky to Sartre, ed. by W. Kaufmann, p. 120.
15. Margarret Chatterji : The Existentialist outlook, Oriental Longman, 1973, p, 151.

this rejection of the transcendental ego in his philosophy, Sartre advocates a theatre of situation but not of character. He writes in "What is Literature ? : "No more character; heroes are freedom caught in a trap like all of us."[16] Marxist philosophy is matched by the literature of social realism. Catholic humanism is reflected in a Mauriac or a Graham Grene. Camus' understanding of the sense of the absurd and his refusal to capitulate to the absurd provides the link between existentialism as a philosophy and the contemporary experimental theatre. James H. Clancy writes, "The absurd is felt when the man's desire and the world should be explicable is seen to be opposed by the fact that the world cannot be made explicable in human terms." To Ionesco absurd is "that which is devoid of purpose." He also says that "If man is not tragic he is ridiculous and painful, 'cosmic' in fact, and by revealing his absurdity one can achieve a sort of tragedy", yet, the life of contemporary man in an absurd world is not without its dignity, and, as Martin Esslin puts it, "the dignity of man lies in his ability to face reality in all its senselessness, to accept it freely without fear, without illusion—and to laugh at it."[17] Esslin's detailed study of the theatre of the absurd shows how it presents man "stripped of the accidental circumstances of social position or historical context, confronted with basic choices, the basic situations of his existence."[18]

Sartre is almost an apostle of literality. What Frank Kermode says of Beckett could also be said of Sartre; "......he meditates much more upon the desert in which we normally dwell than upon the delicious oasis."[19] Sartre leaves us with the injunction to create value in valueless world.[20] In this book

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16. Sartre : What is Literature ?, New York, 1949, p. 217.
17. Vide, The Theatre of the Absurd.
18. Ibid., p. 391.
19. Frank Kermode : Modern Essays, p. 206.
20. Margarret Chatterji : The Existentialist outlook, op. cit., p. 155.

'What is Literature ?' Sartre produced the theory that literature and any other kind of art, is a social phenomenon. Sartre recognises that the author guides the reader's and spectator's mental activity, "but all he does is to guide him. The landmarks he set up—are separated...The reader must invite them...In short, reading is directed creation."[21] Sartre calls his mental and emotional activity of the reader or spectator a "re-invention" and says "It is the conjoint effort of author and reader which brings upon the scene that create: an imaginary object which is the work of the mind. There is no art except for and by others."[22] Long ago, Croce had pointed out that in order to have aesthetic experience, the spectator or reader must be actively creating. "Every one of us is something of a painter, something of a sculptor, something of a musician, something of a poet; but how little in comparison with those who are so-called because of the higher degree in which they possess the most common disposition and energy of human nature."[23] To Sartre, Literature is "the subjectivity of a society in permanent revolution," in constant renewal of its institutions and orders whenever they show a tendency to petrify. "This conception corresponds to that ideal of fluidity and creative evolution which, according to Bergson, is one of the features of life, and which existentialism tries to stimulate in everything touching human existence."[24]

In his famous thesis against Feuerbach, Karl Marx had declared that upto-now, "the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to

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21. Sartre : What is Literature ?, p. 45.
22. Ibid., p. 43.
23. B. Croce : Estetics (Bari, 1928), p. 14, Quoted in Alfred Sterm : Sartre—His Philosophy and Psycho-analysis, The Liberal Art Press, New York, 1953, p. 75.
24. Alfred Stern : Sartre—His Philosophy and Psycho-analysis, The Liberal Art Press, New York, 1953, p. 97.

change it."[25] Sartre obviously, adopted this cry when he wrote "we are no longer with those who want to possess the world, but with those who want to change it."[26] He also adopts Marx's ideal of a future "classless society" which would liberate literature.[27] All this leads to certain critics to think of Sartre as very close to communism, but they overlook the deep dissensions between the philosophy of communism and the philosophy of existentialism. Sartre rejects the materialistic ontology of Marxism and its determinism based on Hegel's dialectic, which would deprive of his freedom of choice and suppress his subjectivity.[28] He reproaches Marxism for not allowing him the development of different shades within itself and thus having become a kind of "church".[29]

The communists, on the other hand, accuse Sartre's philosophy of ego-centrism, nihilism, anti-humanism, idealism, lack of integration of man in society, etc. One of Sartre's communist critics, the French man Auguste Cornu, summarises these reproaches : "Sartre's existentialism...appears, in sum, as the ideological expression of the decadent bourgeoise at the period when capitalism is breaking up. It translates this decadence into the escape from the real, the isolation of the individual, and the affirmation of the ego's absolute autonomy and superiority to the world.."[30] Likewise, George Lucas, recognises Sartre as an "authentic thinker of high class", but reproaches him for sketching a caricature of Marxism and winning an easy victory against it.[31] Existential anxiety is described by the

25. Karl Marx : Thesis on Feuerback, p. 99.
26. Sartre : What is Literature ?, op. cit., p. 238.
27. Ibid., CP. pp. 158, 263-64, etc.
28. "Materialisme at Revolution", Les Temps Modernes, I (June. 1946), 14, 22, 25, etc.
29. Sartre : What is Literature ?, pp. 149-150.
30. Auguste Corn : Bargsonism and Existentialism, p. 166.
31. George Lucas : Existentialisme ou Marxisme ? (Paris, 1948) pp. 144, 148. Quoted in Alfred Stern : Sartre—His Philosophy and Psycho-analysis, op. cit., p. 80.

communist as an historical and class phenomenon, a symptom of the decomposition of the Bourgeoisie, and Ṣartre does not deny it. Moreover, he insists that this decomposition can disclose certain aspects of the human condition. Furthermore, the historicity of existential philosophy and literature does not mean a subjection of the philosophical quest of the absolute to historical relativity. Sartre clarifies this point in 'What is Literature ?' when he says that "the war and the occupation, by precititating us into a state of fusion, perforce made us undiscover the absolute at the heart of relativity itself."[32] And further he explains the task "to create a literature which unites and reconciles the metaphysical absolute and the relativity of the historical fact."[33] With the term "metaphysical" Sartre designates an effort to embrace human existence and human condition in its totality.

Sartre, in an interview in 1959, rejecting the idea of "pure literature" and "art for art's sake," explains : "If literature is not anything; it is worth nothing. This is what I mean by commitment. It wilts if it is reduced to innocence, or to songs. If a written sentence does not reverberate at every level of man and society, then it makes no sense. What is the literature of an epoch but the epoch appropriated by its literature ?"[34] So far as Sartre is concerned, "engaged" or "committed" literature means literature in the service of human freedom and socialism. Camus' position on engaged literature is a much subtle one than Sartre's. For Camus, the artist has certain inescapable responsibilities. First, he has the responsibility to act as a witness and a voice for those who cannot speak. Second, the artist has the obligation to preserve the purity of

32. Sartre : What is Literature ? op. cit., p. 215.
33. Ibid., p. 222.
34. "The Purpose of Writing" in Between Existentialism and Marxism, NLB., London, 1974. Quoted in Max Charles Worth : The Existentialists and Jean-Paul Sartre, George Prior Publishers, London-England, 1976, p. 32.

language as an instrument of public communication. Third, art is of its very nature communal, since the truth unites men and lies divide them. Finally, for Camus, art is intrinsically concerned with human liberation.[35]

Lucio P. Ruotolo[36] has presented a remarkable study of the six novelists—three English (Virginia Wolf, Graham Grene, William Golding) and three American (William Faulkner, Ralph Ellison, Bernard Malamud), who represent the widest spectrum of existential intention in English fiction during the past fifty years. These novels reveal a historicized treatment of existential experience and changes in historical consciousness that have affected the treatment of existential heroism. More or less, in the same direction, Paul Tillich has contributed a graphic analysis of existential historicity. He clarifies the distinction between existentialism and essentialism in his Systematic Theology. "Existence is estrangement and not reconciliation, it is dehumanisation and not the expression of essential humanity. It is the process in which man becomes a thing and ceases to be a person. History is not the divine self-manifestation but a series of unreconciled conflicts, threatening man with self-destruction. The existence of the individual is filled with anxiety and threatened by meaninglessness. With this description of man's predicament, all existentialists agree and therefore opposed to Hegel's essentialism. They feel that it is an attempt to hide the truth about man's actual state."[37]

Myths, Society and Case History

About the middle of this century novelists and dramatists stopped making men and women to order for the psychologists

35. Albert Camus : The Myth of Sisyphus, Penguin Modern Classics, 1975, p. 190.
36. Lucio P. Ruotolo : Six Existential Heroes, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1973.
37. Paul Tillich : Systematic Theology, Vol. II, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 25.

and began to re-create Man. The movement began in France. Such at least is the view of Jean-Paul Sartre, who maintains that there is a sharp cleavage between the literature produced before the Second World-War and the works of the last two decades. Albert Camus concurs, though without stressing the abruptness of the change : "The scope of art", he says, "has been extended from psychology of the human condition."[38] Both the authors believe that the contemporary writer portray characters wholly engaged in a specific social situation and confronted with a necessity of making a definite choice. In the first number of Les Temps Modernes Sartre writes : "We are with those who want to change both man's social condition and the conception which he has of himself."[39] Sartre has been the most specific in defining the new trend in literature. In an article called "Forgers of Myths", he said that pre-war drama was a "theatre of characters", whereas the new French play-wrights have been providing us with a "theatre of situations." He further explains, "The theatre, as conceived of in the period between the two World-Wars, and as it is perhaps still thought of in the United States to-day, is a theatre of characters. The analysis of characters and their confrontation was the theatre's chief concern. The so-called "situations" existed only for the purpose of throwing the characters into clearer relief. The best plays in their period were psychological studies of a crowd, a liar, an ambitious man or a frustrated one. Occasionally, a playwright made an effort to outline the workings of a passion—usually love–or to analyse an inferiority complex."[40] Camus' evaluation of the realistic

38. Albert Camus : The Rebel, Penguin Modern Classics, 1973, p. 239.

39. Quoted in Hazel E. Barnes : The Literature of Possibility : A Study in Humanistic Existentialism, London, Tavistock Publications, 1961, p. 9.

40. "Forgers of Myths, " The Young Playwrights of France", Theatre Arts, XXX, Vol. 6 (June, 1946) p. 324.

American novel is different from Sartre's, in that Camus feels that its characters have no inner life whatsoever. All are presented through merely a series of external responses to events and are almost indistinguishable from one another.[41] Hazel E. Barnes comments that Camus' judgement is rather less fair than Sartre's. The important point, however, is that both men criticise the realistic writer for having too little respect for his characters' ability to act as free individual.[42] In support of his observation Hazel E. Barnes states that there are two reasons why Sartre believes that the literature of characters is neither appropriate nor adequate for the existential writer. Firstly, he holds that it stems from a false view of man. A person does not possess a ready-made character, formed by heredity and environment. He is free at any time to make a new choice of himself, to remake his so-called "nature". Sartre's second reason is a historical one, what we might call a "literature of average situations." It implied an acceptance of the human condition as a natural, infinite milieu within which the individual worked out his everyday problems. But the War and occupation changed all that. His choice committed him only to one of two extremes—cowardice and heroism.

Sartre hopes that this literature will present basic human situations in a new perspective and will consist of a little concern about laws of human nature. "What is universal...... is not nature but the situations in which man finds himself; that is, not the sum total of his psychological traits but the limits which enclose him on all sides."[43] His second requirement is formulated in relation to the theatre. We must realize, he observes, that the theatre is or should be in essence a collective religious phenomenon. As such it will reject realism

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41. Albert Camus : Rebel, op. cit., p. 227.
42. Hazel E. Barnes : The Literature of Possibility, op. cit., p. 11.
43. Sartre : "Forgers of Myth", p. 325.

and will work with myths.[44] Sartre would agree with Camus whole-heartedly at the issue that the creative writer who has rejected the possibility of any more than human destiny for man will not cease to delight in myths. But they will be myths "with no depth other than that of human suffering and, like it, inexhaustible."[45] They will not be like "the divine fable which amuses and blinds", but rather myths which contain the difficult wisdom of earth and a passion which knows that it has no to-morrow.

Finally, the literature of hexis must be abandoned in favour of a literature of praxis. By "literature of hexis" Sartre means the writing which seeks merely a sympathetic, explanatory view of life; by "literature of praxis" he means a literature which inspires action.[46] According to Sartre, literature is preoccupied with the relation between what man *is* and what he *is* choosing to make himself within the historical perspective. Man cannot choose his age, but he must choose himself within it. The writer is oriented toward the future, but the future which he wants to help determine is the future of this generation, not a dim area on the near side of eternity. "We write for our Time."[47] Camus is not really in disagreement with Sartre on this point. "Authentic creation is a gift to the future", he says.[48] And Camus believes that to-day the stakes are high. "When the passions of the times put the fate of the whole world at stake, then artistic creation wants to dominate the whole of destiny."[49] In his acceptance speech when he received the Noble Prize, Camus stated that the artist must accept the two trusts

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44. Ibid., p. 330.
45. Albert Camus : Myth of Sisyphus, op. cit., p. 106.
46. Hexis and praxis are both Greek words. Hexis refers to a permanent state or condition, praxis means action.
47. "We write for our own Time", Virginia Quarterly Review, XXIII, No. 2 (Spring, 1947), p. 243.
48. Albert Camus : Myth of Sisyphus, op. cit., p. 212.
49. Albert Camus : The Rebel, op. cit. p. 239.

of his calling, "the service of truth and the service of freedom." For, since the writer's purpose is to unite man, he must oppose falsehood and slavery.[50]

The Flies, like most of Sartre's works, is at once myth, case history, and social comment which deals with the question of man's place in the universe, in opposition to Aeschylus, who claimed that there is a Divine Justice concerned about the affairs of man. Sartre's Orestes declates, "What do I care about Zeus ? Justice is man's business, and I need no god to instruct me in it."[51] Sartre's hero leads a humanistic revolt against the whole concept of deity and says that man must make himself fully responsible for his destiny. Similarly, Sisyphus is a myth of absurdity, a concept common (with variation) to both Camus and Sartre. "The absurd" refers to the discrepancy between man's aspirations and his possibilities, and to the lack of any ultimate, external justification of man and his projects. "Sisyphus is the absurd hero. He becomes so asmuch through his passions as through his torture. His scorn of the gods, his hatred of death, and his passion for life won him that unspeakable penalty in which the whole being is exerted towards accomplishing nothing. This is the price that must be paid for the passions of this earth."[52] Still for Camus, Sisyphus repersents also the grandeur of man. As Sisyphus decides each time to try again to roll the rock up the hill, he gives his own free will a meaning to what he is doing, "This universe, henceforth without a master, appears to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, every mineral splinter in that night-enfolded mountain is a world in-itself. 'The very struggle toward the summit is enough to fill a man's heart. We must

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50. Speech of Acceptance upon the Award of Nobel Prize for Literature—December 10, 1957, trans. by Sustin O'Brien (New York : Knopf, 1958), pp. LXX.
51. Sartre : Theatre (Paris : Gallimard, 1947), p. 80.
52. Albert Camus : Myth of Sisyphus : Penguin Modern Classics, ed., 1975, p. 108.

picture Sisyphus as happy."[53] A parallel analysis in drama is Caligula. Caligula, of course, is a historical rather than a mythological figure, but Camus' picture of man in no way pretends to be a historical study. Caligula, too, is represented as having discovered the essential absurdity of life. The truth is, however, that the existentialist writer is far less likely to retell an old myth than to invent a new one.

Encounter with Nothingness :

In existentialism, crisis is conceived as an "Encounter with Nothingness". The city of Argos, in Sartre's 'The Flies', is a place where the dead are more alive than the living. Its usurper king, Aegisthus, expresses the experience of estrangement : "It is neither sad and nor gay, the desert, the innumerable nothingness of sand under the luminous nothingness of the sky : it is sinister. Oh, I would give my kingdom for being able to shed one tear."[54] Estrangement involves loneliness which holds the individual in solitary confinement within the impervious walls of his individuality. Kierkegaard has an untranslatable term for this condition, rendered in the Princeton translation with "reservedness" which means "being locked up within ourselves" but literally meaning "being locked up within oneself." To this inwardness of despair communication presents it as an impossible achievement caught up as it is in this dilemma. Estrangement involves a disintegration of society. Not the hermit in the African desert is the symbol of solitude in an estranged world but :

> "The desert is squeezed in the tube-train next to you,
> The desert is in the heart of your brother."
>
> —T. S. Eliot, "The Rock"

The social nature of estrangement is the discovery of Karl Marx. He directed his criticism against capitalist society and

53. Ibid., p. 111.
54. Sartre : The Flies, II, 4. Quoted in Kuhn Helmet : Encounter with Nothingness, an essay on Existentialism, London, Mathmen & Co. Ltd., 1951, p. 34.

private property. Kierkegaard rediscovered the meaninglessness of the world through a fall from the height of Hegel's philosophy of reconciliation with the world. Similarly, Marx discovered estrangement against the foil of society as man's true homestead. Society, for him, is the essential unity of man and nature. Marx, however, was very far from teaching Existentialism. For him estrangement was not the status of man's natural existence but merely a phase of man's historical life. Viewed by him, the path of mankind inevitably leads through this void in order to make an uplift through the revolutionary crisis, to "Perfect Humanism." The Encounter with Nothingness, for Marx is a socio-political crisis. So far Sartre, "There are no signs in the world"; he affirms. And he concludes, therefore, man is free.[55]

The counterpart in Heidegger to Marx's social idea of estrangement is the world as the superficial prattle and anonymous publicity. Even more revealing is a comparison of Marx's concept of "having" with that developed by Sartre. Reading Marx backward, Sartre translates "I become my property" into "my property becomes (part of) myself." But the self is void amidst the density of Being—the "hole" of Nothingness. Hence, "destruction realizes—more subtly perhaps than creation—the nature of appropriation, for the object is no longer there to show its impenetrability."[56] Generally speaking, the consumer is the owner in his most revealing role and he desires nothing less than the whole world, an insignificant enjoyment such as the consuming of tobacco may take on a frightful symbolic significance. "Through the tobacco which I smoked it was the world that burned, that allowed itself to be smoked, that resolved itself its vapour to revert into me."[57] The anguish suffered by the mystic in the spiritual desert is still prayer, whereas the Existentialists' Encounter with Nothingness

55. Sartre : L' Existentialisme, etc. p. 47.
56. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 683.
57. Ibid., p. 687.

is "the opposite." There is, however, in the experience of the Dark Night of the Soul another element which is very close to the Existentialist's affliction, the tedium. With his negations the mystic expresses the inability of the human intellect to grasp God. Passing through the Dark Night, the soul is in deep distress. It suffers from a sense of God, and this primal privation is followed by the loss of all its previous possessions. Its joy is turned into dull helplessness and ennui, its Godward advance into a sense of impotence and disintegration, its sense of shelteredness into desolation. "Even the power of voluntary sacrifice and self-discipline is taken away."[58]

Twentieth-century literature is interested no less than Genesis in the question of original sin and man's reason for being. Unlike Darwin it persists in regarding the human race as qualitatively different from the rest of creation, and it is obsessed with the necessity of arriving at a new definition of man. Now, let us take up the novel 'You Shall Know Them' in support of the present issue. 'Man is separate from the rest of nature' is the central theme of Vercor's 'You Shall Know Them.'[59] This novel, a clear example of the literature of situations, is concerned directly and almost exclusively with arriving at a definition of man. There are several points of interest in Vercor's resolution. First, the jury agrees with the counsel for the Defence that "humanity" is not so much the possession of certain biological potentialities as a particular use of these. It is not something strictly determined by biology but a quality defined by men themselves. "No one is human being by a right of nature...Man resembles a very exclusive club. What we call human is defined by us alone. The rules

58. Evenlyn Underhill : Mysticism : A Study in the Nature, Development of Man's spiritual consciousness (12th ed., London, 1930), p. 400.

59. Vercors : You Shall Know Them, trans, by Rita Barisse (Boston : Little. Brown, and Company. 1953), Vercors real name is Jean-Bruller.

within the club are valid for us alone. Hence the need for a legal basis to be established, as much for the admission of new members as for setting up rules and regulations applicable to all."[60] Vercor's attitude toward man as defined in "You Shall Know Them" is essentially that of Pascal, who declared that man as a "thinking reed" is greater than the storm which breaks him, for man can reflect on the situation which the storm cannot. Frances says, "Humanity is not a state we suffer. It's a dignity we must strive to win. A dignity full of pain and sorrow, won, no doubt, at the price of tears... But now I know, I know that all this is n't "a tale told by an idio t, signifying nothing."[61]

Feeling of Alienation

While existentialism is not a 20th century creation, its influence has been strengthened by the catastrophes of recent times. Thus Gabriel Marcel, speaks in his 'An Essay in Autobiography', "We tried hard to believe that humanity in the west could withstand the assault of the forces that were driving it towards catastrophe. I think that not one of us could suspect the fragility, the precariousness, of the civilization which enveloped us like a tegument; a civilization on which the wealth of centuries seemed to have conferred a solidity we would have thought it madness to question."[62] In his essay interpreting the Greek Myth of Sisyphus, Camus offers his own answer to the absurdity of life, that a man can find "freedom" in scoring the world. To Camus, this futile and onerous task symbolized the absurdity of all life. But Sisyphus found freedom, he says, in his scorn for the task and those who had imposed it. "Sisyphus, proletarian of the gods, powerless and rebellous, knows the whole extent of his wretched condition; it is what he thinks of during his descent. The lucidity that

60. Ibid., p. 240.
61. Ibid., p. 244.
62. Gabriel Marcel : The Philosophy of Existentialism (Citadel, New York, 1961), pp. 120-24.

was to constitute his torture at the same time crowns his victory. There is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn."[63]

To Kierkegaard, society was the world given over to "worldliness". To Nietzsche, it was a flock of sheep to be whipped into order by the imperious shepherd. To Sartre and Camus, society is like a woman of the streets whom a "free" man might deal with, while rejecting any obligations she may try to lay upon him. Sartre is more gentle about this. Society is also the "others", who keeps a man's memory alive after he is dead, although how they will think of him he does not know. "One who tries to grasp the meaning of his future death must discover himself as the future prey of others."[64] Camus is more furious, scorning as an infringement of his freedom the very concept that there are laws of nature and society which a man must make part of his thinking. This scorn is the essence of Camus' attack upon Marxism, in his book entitled The Rebel. To Marx, as to Bacon "Nature to be commanded, must be obeyed," and so to Marx, each discovery of such "necessity", including the laws of economics and of the class-forces moving history, increased man's power to change the world. To Camus, such recognition of "necessity" is a "conformity" and infringement of freedom. He calls Marx's view, "creative fatalism". He is shocked that Marx finds capitalism to be an advance over feudalism, and then discovers in capitalism the making forces that would replace it with capitalism. Marx, Camus says, "justifies the order that is established in his time. The most eloquent eulogy of capitalism was made by its greatest enemy. Marx is only anti-capitalist in so far as capitalism is out of date. Another order must be established which will demand, in the name of history, a new conformity."[65] Camus' objection

63. Albert Camus : Myth of Sisyphus, op. cit. p. 109.
64. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 543.
65. Albert Camus : The Rebel, Penguin Modern Classics, p. 160.

to the Marxist view of laws of society is not that it is invalid, but that even if it is true, he wants no part of it. His "freedom" lies in the act of rebellion against "conformity". The existentialist social theory boils down to the principle of, in a hideous world, keeping one's own hands clean. Camus decides that he, personally, will not kill. "The freedom to kill, is not compatible with the sense of rebellion." One can go further by taking up "social killing". Unearthly laws which explain poverty, exploitation, unemployment, crisis and wars, make it possible for society to eliminate them. And certainly to-day, if the movement for peace is worldwide, and his promise of success, it is because people know as never before what are the social causes of war, to organize them about this, to ask people to fight in their own defense, puts its perspective in the future. And so to Camus, this thinking makes Marxism "a slave to history". Thus, he says, "it increases the domain of historic murder and at the same time leaves it without any justification, except in the future—which again demands faith."[66]

Camus wrote in his essay, The Artist and His Time : "considered as artists, we perhaps have no need to interfere in the affairs of the world. But considered as men, yes. The miner who is exploited or shot down, the slaves in the camps, those in the colonies, the legions of persecuted throughout the world—they need all those who can speak to communicate their silence and to keep in touch with them."[67] And it is worth pointing out that, as Phillip Thody writes in Albert Camus : A study of His Work, when, in 1956-57, the atrocities against the Algerian people inflicted by the French Colonial administration reached their peak, and Sartre was making an angry attack upon the torture of prisoners, Camus refused to take part in the protest. He merely pointed out, Thody says, that he "has already made his position clear on Algeria, demanding an end of colonial

66. Ibid., pp. 284, 301.
67. Albert Camus : Sisyphus, Penguin Modern Classics, p. 190.

practices and the setting up to a federation which would assure both Arabs and European settles equal rights, and he is not a writer who is given to excessive repetition of his political suggestions."[68] After all, his hands are clean.

We come across numerous instances of unhappy situations in the celebrated works of T. S. Eliot which culminate in alienation as a literary style. Eliot sees the world around him as a rock on which he is being tortured. He wrote in a symposium, Faith that Illuminates (1935) : "The world of modern literature is corrupted by what I call secularism...it is simply unaware of, simply cannot understand the meaning of, the primacy of the supernatural over the natural life : of something which I assume to be our primary concern."[69] Eliot, overwhelmed with his contemporary world, finds solace in the past literature. In The Waste Land, the recalled memories of these fragments of past poetry with their humanism intimated even when parodied, intensify the desolation of the images reflecting his alienation :

"But at my back in a cold blast I hear
The rattles of the bones and chuckle spread from ear to ear.

× × × × × ×

And on the king my father's death before him."

Eliot comes close to genuine feeling when he expresses directly his own terrible loneliness and anguish. A glaring example can be borrowed from Four Quarters :

"O dark dark dark, They all go into the dark.

× × × × × ×

Leaving only the growing terror of nothing to think about"

In some respects, however, Eliot differs from the existentialists.

68. Thody Phillip : Albert Camus (Grove, New York, 1957), p. 124.
69. Eliot, T. S. : Selected Prose, ed. J. Heyword (Penguin Books, Harmonsworth, 1955), pp. 41-42.

view, and his views and influences can rather be called "pre-existentialist", in that they created a fallow ground for the philosophy. In existentialism, theist as well as atheist, there is a revulsion against dogma and anything that presumes on "authority". In this rejection it finds its "freedom". And there is, occasionally, a relish and joy in the life itself. When existentialism takes a "romantic" view of the world it calls "absurd", Eliot's view is nearer to the "classical". Humanism, love of life, care for grievances of others, belief in progress are sentimentalities, that have nothing to do with religion, and therefore with truth. Consequently, he demands the abandonment of empty hope, shaking love and feeble thoughts. He writes in East Coker :

"I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope
For hope would be hope for the wrong thing; wait without love
For love would be love of wrong thing; there is yet faith
But the faith and love and the hope are all in the waiting
Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought..."

His "classicism", moreover, has nothing to do with the traditions and achievements of classical literature and art. Eliot's "classicism" is closer to "neoclassicism", that is, the achievement of rhetorical clarity and order. His world-view is summarised in the speech of Thomas Becket, in Murder in the Cathedral :

We do not know very much of the future
Except that from generation to generation
The same things happen again and again...only
The fool, fixed in his folly, may think
He can turn the wheel on which he turns.

Existentialism and T. S. Eliot in Comparison and Contrast

There is worth-mentioning similarity of approach to the fundamental problem of life between T. S. Eliot and existential thinkers like St. Augustine, Pascal and Soren Kierkegaard. The

first element in common between Eliot's thought and Christian existentialism is a 'tragic sense of life'. This tragic sense both in Eliot and the existentialists springs from an obsession with the fear of death and a longing for personal immortality. Eliot's Catholic philosophy of life is based on a tragic sense of life. It is in what he calls the "Catholic Philosophy of disillusion",[70] which consists in not expecting "more from *life* than it can give or more from *human* beings than they can give, to look to *death* for what life can give."[71] In his lecture "Catholicism and the International Order" he exhorts us to bear in mind "the Platonic hint that nothing in this world is wholly serious...that nothing including, of course, the prolongation of one's own existence in the world."[72] The sense of disillusionment and the complete resignation originate from the awareness that man's destiny in this world is death. Eliot writes in The Criterion, "what faith in life may be I know not...for the Christian faith is what matters..."[73] This awareness and obsession with death express themselves very often in his poems. In, the "Choruses" from "The Rock", we have :

> "Life you may evade, but death you shall not,
> You shall not deny the stranger."[74]

> "The Portrait of a Lady" ends by asking :
> "Now that we talk of dying
> And should I have the right to smile."[75]

The theme of the awareness of death is visible in "Whispers of Immortality". In the first four stanzas, Eliot writes about

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70. Eliot, T. S. : Dante, Selected Essay, p. 275.
71. Ibid.
72. Eliot, T. S. : "Catholicism and International Order", Essays Ancient and Modern, p. 128.
73. Eliot, T. S. : The Criterion, XII, (January, 1953) p. 278.
74. Eliot, T. S. : Choruses from the 'Rock, The Complete Poems and Plays, p. 104.
75. Eliot, T. S. : The Portrait of a Lady, p. 11.

Webster and Domne, who were both "much possessed by death."[76] The Waste Land" is imbued with the fear of mortality. In "The Hollow Men", "Ash-Wednesday" and "Sweeney Agonistes" the fear of death is the general background.

Now, Let us look at the existentialist's treatment of death. For, Heidegger authentic life is life lived in constant awareness of death. From Socrates to Kierkegaard, this fear of death had been the principal factor which made them reject the consolations of this world. Writing on existentialism, Emmanuel Mounier observes : "It presents the precedence of problems of salvation over the activities of knowledge."[77] Pascal makes the fear of death and the longing for immortality the central factors of his religious thought. He writes : "It is a horrible thing to feel all that we possess slipping away... I approve of not examining the opinion of Copernicus; but this...It concerns all our life to know whether the soul be mortal or immortal."[78] Pascal's religious attitude is determined by the realisation that "We are fools to depend upon the society of our fellow-men. Wretched as we are, powerless as we are, they will not aid us; we shall die alone."[79]

One of the salient themes of Eliot's poetry is the common existentialist preoccupation with death. The Spanish Catholic existentialist thinker Miguel de Unamuno makes the consciousness of death and the human craving for immortality the basic themes of his book entitled 'The Tragic Sense of Life.' Man's tragic predicament lies in the "feeling of uncertainty and the inward struggle between reason on the one hand and faith and the passionate longing for eternal life on the other."[80] This

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76. Eliot, T. S. : Whispers of Immortality, p. 32.
77. Emmanuel Mounier : Existentialist Philosophies, trans. Eric Blow (London : Rock Liff, 1951), p. 4.
78. Blaise Pascal : Pensees, trans. William Finlayson Trotter [New York : J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1931], p. 62.
79. Ibid., pp. 61-62.

realisation that "tragedy is at the heart of life,"[81] expresses itself as the sense of disillusionment in Eliot's poetry, especially in "The Waste Land."

The second remarkable conception common to Eliot and the existentialists is the conception of man as suffering with original sin, imperfect, imperceptible, and limited in his capacities. The condition of human finitude is explained by the non-Christian atheistic existentialists in terms of the concept of "estrangement". Man has been estranged both from his true being and from Nature, observes Emmanuel Mounier: "The very essence of religious history is to reconcile man to himself and with Nature. Sinful man, is however, the victim of an accidental estrangement, the estrangement which separates him from God because of sin (and the results of sin) committed by the whole of the creation including himself."[82]

Thirdly, Eliot's approach to contemporary socio-political problems is similar to the approach of the existentislists. Whenever Eliot defines the Christian world-view, or the "Catholic philosophy of disillusion", he employs this concept to establish his points of view. E. L. Allen, concerning the existential thinker says: "To think existentially is therefore to come to grips with the human situation as one in which we are actually involved. The existentialist is thus the actual, living, striving person whose thought is embedded in his life, is indeed part of the process of living. What happens to him is never merely something to be investigated, it is something with which he is concerned...the existential thinker makes no pretence to disinterested knowledge."[83] Eliot uses the concept of the Christian thinker in "Catholicism and International Order" to defend

80. Miguel da Unamuno : The Tragic Sense of Life, p. 128.
81. F. O. Mathiessen : Achievement of T. S. Eliot, [London : Oxford University Press, 1947], p. 107.
82. Emmanuel Mounier : Existential Philosophies, p. 35.
83. E. L. Allen : Existentialism from Within; [Longman, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1953], p. 10.

the Catholic organization of society. According to him, the Christian thinker arrives at "faith" through a method which might seem disingenuous and perverse to the unbeliever. Eliot writes : "The Christian thinker and I mean the man who is trying consciously and unconsciously to explain to himself the sequence which culminates in faith, rather than the public apologist—proceeds the rejection and elimination. He finds the world to be so and so; he finds its character inexplicable by any non-religious theory; among religions he finds Christianity and Catholic Christianity, to account most satisfactorily for the world and especially for the moral world within; and thus, by which what Newman calls 'powerful and concurrent reasons', he finds himself inexorably committed to the dogmas of the Incarnation."[84]

The fourth common element is the conception of "choice" or "decision". This conception is mainly Kiekegaardian. He maintained in opposition to Hegelian idealism that while thought may be full of synthesis, life is full of choices and action. Kierkegaard maintained that since there is a discontinuity, or a "break" between the "transcendental absolute" and "finite human life", there can be no satisfactory answers to our theoretical and practical problems. Man is confronted in his every day life with a large number of possibilities, hence he cannot but choose one course of action. Man can choose since he is free. But the freedom is the freedom to choose in a "situation" from a set of given possibilities. His freedom is thus limited. This Kierkegaardian conception of "choice", the conception of necessity for "decision and action", recurs in the themes of Eliot's poetic drama. Miss M. C. Brand-Brook points out to this Kierkegaardian aspect of Eliot's plays.[85]

Eliot observes that the grievances of mankind to-day are not the products of a vicious economic and socio-political envi-

84. Eliot, T. S. : Essays Ancient and Modern, p. 146.
85. Miss M. C. Bradbrook : T. S. Eliot (London, Longman, Green and Co. Ltd., 1955), pp. 38-39.

ronment, but "our permanent difficulties are difficulties of every moment."[86] The agonistic view of life, the view that interprets man's temporal condition as a struggle, as a direct confrontation with predicamental challenges, is one element among many others which entitles us to call Eliot's world-view existential. Existential thinkers proclaim that on philosophical systems, established as yet, can help man in solving his personal problems. "The genuine critical dilemma of the individual's life... are not solved by intellectual exploration of the facts nor of the laws of thinking about them. Their revolutions emerge through conflicts and tumults in the soul, anxieties, agonies, perilous adventure of faith into unknown territories."[87]

The thinkers of this school, while dealing with man, employ certain notions. Emmanuel Mounier analyses eight distinct existential concepts. These are : "The contingency of the human being"; "the importance of reason". The bounding leap of the human being", "the instability of human being", "estrangement", "the conclusive-finality and the imminenee of death" "solitude and the secret state", and "nothingness". These concepts, however appear as abstrue as the concepts of academic philosophy."[88] The recent revival of existential philosophy on account of the contemporary sense of crisis is summed up by Ralph Harper; "Man is on the operating table, naked, ashamed, worried : he faces pathologists rather than surgeons... Man's nobility as well as his misery is on display."[89] He adds further : "The patient himself—we cannot yet call him the corpse—is reduced to thinking of life in his lowest, most eleme-

86. Eliot, T. S. : The Idea of Christian Society (London : Fabre and Fabre, 1939), p. 7.
87. Phillip Mairet, see "Introduction" in J. P. Sartre, Existentialism and Humanism (London : Mathuen and Co. Ltd., 1948).
88. Mounier, Emmanuel : op. cit. pp. 24-42.
89. Ralph Harper : Existentialism—a Theory of Man (Cambridge : Harward University Press, 1948), p. 15.

ntal terms as a test match between personal freedom and contingent circumstance, and he is trusting to the sympathy of a fellow patient, a pathologist himself. It has never looked quite like this before."[90] We come across a strange parallel feeling in Eliot when he himself uses this imagery of sickness and disease frequently to drive home this very existential sense of malady. One cannot fail to note the point-by-point correspondence between the metaphor of sickness used by Harper and the one used by Eliot in the fourth section "East-Coker" :

The wounded surgeon plies the steel
That question the distempered part :—[91]
And again :

"Our own health is the disease
If we obey the dying nurse
Whose constant care is not to please
But to remind of our, and Adam's curse.
And that, to be restored, our sickness must grow worse".[92]

The "wounded surgeon" and "the dying nurse" correspond to Harper's fellow patient, the pathologist himself. "This similarity between Eliot's and existential imagery lends some support to the view that Eliot's intellectual approach is existential. Nietzsche described modern philosophy as one that : "...never gets beyond the threshold, and rigorously denies itself the right to enter-that is philosophy in its last throes, and end, an agony, something that awakens pity."[93] The existentialist have crossed the threshold.

(B) Existential Psychotherapies

The focal concern of existential psychotherapies becomes

90. Ibid., p 15.
91. Eliot, T. S. : Four Quarters : The Complete Poems and Plays [New York : Harcourt, Brace & Co.], p. 127.
92. Ibid., p. 127.
93. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil, Foulis, 1911, p. 136.

quite apparent in their attempts to understand the ultimate challenge of human existence on the deeper and broader level. Contrary to the over emphasis on the techniques in other therapies, which goes along with the tendencies to see the human beings as the objects to be calculated, managed, analysed and modified, existential therapies help patients recognise and experience their own existence in proper perspectives. The existential therapies emphasise "our uniqueness as individuals, our quest for values, and meaning and our freedom for self-direction and self-fulfilment."[94] Instead of considering man as capable of being reduced to original data so as to enable one determine one's drives or desires and thus ending up with an imposing system of substances which could be referred to as mechanisms, dynamisms or patterns, the existential therapies hold that the drives or dynamisms can be understood only in the context of the structure of existence of that particular person. Thus, the distinctive character of existential therapies is that they are "concerned with ontology, the science of being, and with Dasein, the existence of the particular being."[95]

The existential therapies can be understood only in the context of the central themes and concepts of existentialism. A most basic theme is "to be and not to be." Being is that which remains whereas non-being always engenders inner confusion and deeper emotional strain. Man is that particular being who knows that at some future moment he will not be; he is the being who is always in dialectical relation with non-being death. The non-being is an inseparable part of 'being'. "Anxiety" and "guilt" are regarded as ontological experiences

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94. Coleman, J. C. : Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life, 5th Edition, Bombay : D. B. Taraporewala, 1976, p. 70.

95. May, R. : The Origins and a Significance of the Existentialist Movement. In R. May, E. Angle, and H. F. Ellenberger [Eds.] Existence, A New Dimension in Psychiatry and Psychology, New York, Basic, 1958. p. 37.

of threat of imminent non-being. Anxiety is the subjective state of individuals becoming aware that his existence can become destroyed, that he can lose himself and his world and he can become nothing. The "being-in-the-world" is primarily a matter of finding satisfactory values and guiding one's life by them. The world is contended as the meaningful relationships in which a person exists and in the design of which he participates. Human beings simultaneously live in "three modes of the world"; the Umwelt or the world around which comprises of our needs and desires; the Mitwelt or the world of one's fellow men whom he establishes interrelations; and the Eigenwelt or one's own world which has a mode of relationship to one's self-awareness or self-relatedness. The reality of being in the world is lost if one of these modes is emphasised to the exclusion of other two. Most profound human experiences such as anxiety, depression and joy have been surmised to occur more in the "dimension of time" than in space while "transcending the immediate situation" in the basis of human freedom. The unique characteristic of human being is the vast range of possibilities in any situation which in turn depends on one's "self-awareness."[96]

It would not be inappropriate to discuss briefly some of the most important implications of these basic themes of existentialism for therapeutic techniques. The first implication is concerned with the variability of method of treatment among existential therapists, from person to person, the therapy varies and the specific technique to be used is decided on the basis of the question as to what would best reveal the existence of the patient and what would best illuminate his being in the world. Secondly, the psychological dynamisms always derive their meaning, from the existential situation of the patient's own immediate life. Thirdly, the emphasis is always on the

96. May, R. : Contributions of Existential Psychotherapy. In R. May, E. Angel, & H. E. Ellenberger [Eds.], op. cit., pp- 37-91,

patient and the therapist does not perform as a shadowy reflector but an alive human being having concern with understanding and experiencing the being-of-the-patient. Fourthly, the therapist attempts to analyse out the ways of behaving. Fifthly, the purpose of the therapy is that the patient must experience his existence as real so that he can become aware of his existence fully. And finally, commitment is taken as a necessary pre-requisite for seeing the truth which exist only as individual himself produces it in action.

There are many types of existential therapies with procedural emphasis. A brief description of the chief types of such therapies is presented below :—

(1) Existentialist Psychotherapy

This therapy is simply the application of certain existentialist concepts to psychotherapy without regard to phenomenology of psychoanalysis. There is no standard system or method of this therapy. The importance of 'confrontation', is tressed, challenging the individual directly with questions pertaining to meaning and purpose of his existence. The existential nourosis is the illness that occurs from the individual's inability to see meaning in life and the patient lives an inauthentic existential modality.[97] There is also an 'encounter' or the complex relationship that is established between two interacting human beings in therapeutic situation. The 'Kairos' is specific times when a certain patient is inwardly ready for a certain kind of intervention and that the intervention is likely to be fully successful in such times only. The immediacy or the urgency of experience is the touchstone of existential psychotherapy. The chief proponents and followers of this therapy are Frankle, Kielholz, May and Ellenberger.

(2) Existential Psychoanalysis

The existential psychoanalysis is a therapeutic method which has been developed from Sartre's theory of Being and Nothing-

97. May, R. : Love and Will, New York, Norton, 1969.

ness.[98] On the principle that "each individual chooses what he wishes to be and expresses his choice in every aspect of his behaviour, the behavioural analysis serves to detect the system of values chosen originally and make it accessible to the patient, who can decide to recognise his original choice."[99]

(3) Logotherapy

The logotherapy is based on Heidegger's theories. This theory was developed by Victor Frankle and it designates anthropological and psychotherapeutic method of treatment. In analysing biographical details this therapy attempts to understanding individual human existence from the standpoint of its meaning and possible values. It is contended by Frankle that "in depreciation" of the objective quality of meaning and values, the subjectification of the objective, has not yet been rectified. By onto-analysis the subjective, i. e., existence was resubjectified. It is logotherapy that has taken for its own task and purpose the reobjectification of the objective, i. e., logos."[100] Surmizing that the logotherapy restores the phenomenon of human being both subjectively (existentially) and objectively (logos-wise), Frankle proposed "will to meaning", which is not fully achieved, is referred to as existential frustration and used as the starting-point for the therapy. The purpose of this therapy is to arouse the 'unconscious spirit' (conscience, existence, self) which may lead to neurotic disorders if it is repressed.

(4) Psychiatric Phenomenology

The psychiatric phenomenology is an outgrowth of Husserl's

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98. Havens, L. L. : The Existential Use of the Self, American Journal of Psychiatry, 1974, 131, pp. 1-10.
99. Schubert, F. C. : Existentialist Psychoanalysis. In H. J. Eysenck, W. J. Arnold, and Meili (Eds.) Encyclopaedia of Psychology. Vol. I, London : Fontana, 1972, p. 342.
100. Frankle, Vicktor, E. : Psychotherapy and Existentialism, pp. 65-6.6

phenomenological philosophy. "The psychiatric phenomenologist pays special attention to his own state of consciousness in the presence of a patient. The main emphasis lies, however, on the investigation of the patient's subjective state of consciousness."[101] There are three main methods which are applied in psychiatric phenomenology :

(a) **Descriptive Phenomenology**—This type relies mainly on descriptions given by the patients of their subjective experiences. It has four dimensions : first, the phenomenological study of the consciousness; secondly, clinical study of objective symptoms ; thirdly, clinical study of the syndromes; and finally, the disease entities. Karl Jaspers is the chief advocate of this therapy.

(b) **The Genetic Structural Phenomenology**—This method postulates a fundamental unity in an individual's state of consciousness and tries to find a common denominator, i. e., the genetic factor with the help of which the rest can be made adequately intelligible and reconstructed. Minkowski and Von Gebsattle are chief proponents of this type of therapy.

(c) **Categorical Analysis**—This method is a further advancement over the genetic-structure method of psychiatric phenomenology as introduced by Eugene Minkowski. This method takes a system of phenomenological co-ordinates, the most important of which are temporality, spatiality, causality and materiality. The therapist analyses how each of them is experienced by the patient in order to achieve on that basis, a thorough and detailed reconstruction of the patient's inner universe of experience. The chief exponents of this method are Eugene Minkowski, Strauss and Fischer.

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101. Ellenberger, B. F. : A Clinical Introduction to Psychiatric Phenomenology and Existential Analysis. In R. May, E. Angel & H. F. Ellenberger (Eds.) Existence : A New Dimension in Psychiatry & Psychology, New York : Basic, 1958, p. 95.

(5) Existential Analysis

This is also called the 'Daseinsanalyse.' This therapy was introduced by Ludwig Binswanger. The existential analysis as a science of man and as a therapy synthesizes psychoanalysis, phenomenology of Heidegger, and other existentialist concepts modified by original new insights. It is a reconstruction of inner world of experience of psychiatric patients. "Existentialist analysis understands what is specific about man as he exists as a 'ek-stare' in the most liberal sense, i. e., as standing outside and spanning an area of the world open to the perceptions and capable of responding to presence of the person confronting it. To be human being means therefore 'always to be outside the world and confronting it' and primarily to be absorbed together with one's fellow men in perceptional and responsive relationship to them."[102] Existential modes are the dimension of Dasein in regard to Mitwelt. It takes into account the fact that the self changes according to various forms of 'dual', 'plural', 'singular' and 'anonymous' modes. The knowledge of the self and a world that can thus be acquired is the therapeutically beneficial aspects of existential analysis. Binswanger, Boss and Condran are the chief advocates of this therapy.

(6) Gestalt Therapy

The Gestalt therapy emphasises the unity of mind and body and places strong emphasis on the integration of thought, feeling and action. This new innovative therapy was developed by Frederick Perls.[103] This therapy is commonly used in a group setting, but the emphasis is always on the individual. The therapist helps patient perceive those aspects of himself and of

102. Boss, M. & Hicklin, A. : Existential Analysis, In H. J. Eysenck, W. J. Arnold, and R. Meili (Eds.) Encyclopaedia of Psychology, London : Fontana, 1972, p. 341.

103. Perls, F. S. : Gestalt Therapy Verbatim, Lafayette, California, Real People Press, 1969.

his world that are "blocked out" so that the "unfinished business" may be taken care of. The individual is completely on his own in the therapeutic process, even though he may be expressing himself infront of a group. The individual is brought to an "impasse" in which he must confront his feeling and conflicts. A good deal of emphasis is exerted on dreams also in this therapy.

(7) Role Therapy

This therapy has been developed by Laing who has declared himself 'anti-psychiatrist.'[104] According to Laing the contradictory and disconfirming communications subtly and persistently mutilate the self-concepts as a result which a split arises between an individual's false outerself and his true inner self. In essence, the individual dons the masks of insanity as a social role and a barricade. Accordingly in this therapy, lesser attention is focussed on removing symptoms than on finding a path to this remote and often inaccessible sanctuary and thus the individual is assisted to regain his wholeness as a person.

(8) Rational Emotive Therapy

This therapy stems from the works of Ellis.[105] According to whom, in our society we learn many beliefs during early life that tend to be continually reinforced through a sort of self-dialogue. Such mistaken ideas and beliefs inevitably lead to faulty emotional responses and to ineffective and self-defeating behaviours. The therapist works for unmasking patient's self-defeating ideas and verbalisations and for helping him change his faulty assumptions and verbalige some more constructive ones to himself. Thus, a cognitive aspect is envisaged enabling the patient to live a creative, emotionally satisfying and fulfilling life.

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104. Laing, R. D. : The Divided Self, London : Penguin, 1965.
105. Ellis, A. : Rational Emotive Therapy. In R. J. Corsini (Ed.), Current Psychotherapies, Itasca, III : Peacock, 1973.

(9) Reality Therapy

This therapy has been formulated by Glasser.[106] On the assumptions that in early life, the individual develops a basic sense of right and wrong that provides the basis for his later values. The disease is taken as a conflict with the basic sense of right and wrong. The therapy focusses on helping the patient clarify his basic values and evaluate his current behaviour in relation to them. The patient's set of values are often influenced by the values of the therapist who works as a moral agent and model.

(10) Experiential or Intensive Therapy

This therapy has been developed by Marer.[107] This therapy claims that right behaviour is a way of being which provides for actualisation. Being the delated and integrated new person means engaging in right behaviour. Experiencing the potentials means behaving and the right behaviour provides for these experiencings. In order to experience, the behaviour is required; the right behaviour unlocks the experiencings. The state is that of a vacuum to be filled with the right behaviour, a vacuum of experiencing which is a context wherein the right behaviour is a necessary element. This hunger is a strong ally in the search for right way of being for the behaviour which enables experiencing to occur. Thus the task of the therapist is only to help the patient to search for the right behaviour.

The existential therapies have been criticised on three grounds, viz. for their lack of systematized model of human behaviour, for their lack of agreed-upon therapeutic procedures, and for their vagueness about what transpires between a patient and a therapist. However, as would be apparent from the foregoing theories, the existential therapists do not take these as limita-

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106. Glasser, W. : Reality Therapy, New York : Harper, 1965.
107. Marer, A. R. : Sequence & Consequence in Experiential Psychotherapies. In C. L. Cooper & C. P. Alberfer (Eds.) Advances in Experiential Social Process, Vol. I, 1978, pp. 39-65.

tions. Contrarily, they appreciate these as the signs of strength and vitality of the therapies. In any event, many of these therapies have profoundly affected the trend of modern psychotherapy and existence has again attained its pivotal position which was denied to it by the highly system-oriented therapies.

[C] Existentialism and Theology

Philosophical tradition in the recent past furnished a platform and inspired theologicians to tackle the burning problems concerning human life in a new perspective. They adopted reactionary attitude against the tradition. Of Barth, it has been remarked that "he is always the theologian criticising the philosophers, and the theologians who allow their teaching to be determined by philosophical notions."[108] The main issue of discussion is man himself. Interpretations concerning life, presented by theology and existentialism, rotate around it. One school is concerned with the divine, the other with the human. Now, let us return for a moment to the Christian doctrine of man. St. Paul taught a trichotomy of man's being as opposed to the dualism of Greek philosophy. Man is body, soul and spirit, and we find this content for the concept of man by going to the New Testament writings.[109] On a closer analysis, if we conceive man's being substantially, then we may conclude that, according to St. Paul, he is made up of three elements. On the other hand, if we conceive the being of man existentially, then we may conclude with Bultmann that man consists neither of two elements nor of three, but is a unity with different possible ways of being, here indicated by the terms, body, soul and spirit.[110] Heidegger thinks[111] that the progress of science

108. R. Barth Hoyle : The Teaching of Karl Barth, S. C. M. Press, p. 57.

109. I. Thess., 5, 23.

110. John Macquarrie : An Existentialist Theology—A comparison of Heidegger and Bultman-SCM Press Ltd., 56 Bloomsburry Street, London, 1960, p. 7.

111. Heidegger : S. U. Z., p. 9.

consists in the constant revision and clarification of the first principles and basic concepts from which it sets out—a view with which the historian of science would probably agree.[112] On the special problem of theology, Heidegger remarks : "Theology is seeking a more primordial interpretation (than formerly) of the being of man in relation to God, prescribed by the meaning of faith itself and remaining with it. It is slowly beginning to understand once more Luther's insight that its system of dogma rests on a foundation which is not itself a matter of faith, and the concepts of which are not only inadequate for theological problems but obscure and distort them.[113]

The argument, presented in support of the present issue is successfully summarised by Paul Tillich : "Theology, when dealing with our ultimate concern, presupposes in every sentence the structure of being, its categories, laws and concepts. Theology, therefore, cannot escape the question of being any more easily than can philosophy. The attempt of biblicism to avoid non-biblical, ontogical terms is doomed to failure as surely as the corresponding philosophical attempts. The Bible itself always uses the categories and concepts which describe the structure of existence. On every page of every religious or theological text these concepts appear : time, space, cause, thing, subject, nature, moment, freedom, necessity, life, value, knowledge, experience, being, and non-being. Biblicism may try to preserve their popular meaning, but then it ceases to be theology. It must neglect the fact that a philosophical understanding of these categories has influenced ordinary language for many centuries. It is surprising how casually theological biblicists use a term like, "history" when speaking of Christianity as a historical religion or of God as "The Lord of History". They forget the meaning they connect with the word "history"

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112. C. F. Dampier : A History of Science, C. U. P., pp. 457 & 491.

113. Heidegger : S. U. Z., p. 10.

that has been formed by thousands of years of historiography and philosophy of history. They forget that historical being is our kind of being in addition to others and that, in order to distinguish it from the word "nature", for instance, a general vision of the structure of being is presupposed. They forget that the problem of history is tied up with the problems of time, freedom, accident and so on, and that each of these concepts has had a development similar to the concept of history. The theologian must take seriously the meaning of the terms he uses. They must be known to him in whole depth and breadth of their meaning. Therefore, the systematic theologian must be a philosopher in critical understanding even if not in creative power."[114]

Existentialism is not a philosophy in a clear-cut way but a type of philosophy, highly flexible, appearing in widely different forms as the atheism of Sartre, the catholicism of Marcel, and the orthodoxy of Berdyaev. Mounier has constructed a family tree of existentialism, its roots going far back into the pre-Christian era.[115] Father Copleston claims the existence of a school of thought with resemblances to existentialism in the late Middle Ages.[116] Brock finds traces of existentialism in Augustine's reflections on "the ceaseless unresnt which marks the temporal life of the individual".[117] There were undoubted stirrings of the existentialist type of thought in ancient Greek, for example, in Socrates.[118] Though it was not a dominant trend in classical philosophy, yet more than sufficient attention has

114. Paul Tillich : Systematic Theology, Nisbet, Vol. I, pp. 24-25.

115. Emmanuel Mounier : Existentialist Philosophies : An Introduction, Rickliff, Saliburry Square, London, 1948, p. 3.

116. In his paper, Existentialism and Modern Man, Blackfriars.

117. Brock : Contemporary German Philosophy, C. U. P. Chap. on Heidegger.

118. C. F. Robin, Greek Thought, K. Paul, p. 159.

been focussed on describing the nature of man as man. On the biblical understanding of his being, man is not simply a part of nature. While both man and nature are the creation of God, and while man in his existence is bound up with the world, the being of man, as made in the image of God,[119] is conceived as quite distinct from the being of nature. Man cannot be submerged in nature, or merged in the laws of the cosmos, so long as, he remains true to his destiny. The creator's greatest gift to man, that of the personal "I", necessarily places him, in analogy with Gods being, at a distance from nature.[120] Coming to existentialism, we find that man is concrete human person, not an abstract epistemological subject. But at the same time he is considered under a particular aspect, namely as a free, self-creating and self-transcending subject.[121] Kierkegaard never liked the submerging of the individual in the collectivity or universal and of stressing the need for becoming more, and not less, of the individual. According to him, the specific immortality of the age consists precisely in the depreciation of the individual. "Each age has its own characteristic depravity. Our's is perhaps not pleasure or indulgence or sensuality, but rather a disolute pantheistic contempt for the individual man.[122] Ultimately to become the individual means to affirm freely what one is, a finite being related to God, who is not the Hegelian Idea but the personal and transcendent God of Judaism and Christianity.[123] In general, therefore, we can say that "existentialism represents the reassertion of the free man

119. Genesis : I. 26.
120. W. Eichrodt : Man in the Old Testament, S. C. M., Press, p. 30.
121. John Macquarrie : An Existentialist Theology, op. cit., p. 135.
122. Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 317.
123. Frederick Copleston, S. J. : Contemporary Philosophy—Studies of Logical Positivism and Existentialism, London, Browns and Oates, 1956, p. 138.

against the collectivity or any tendency to depersonalisation, and in this respect it is akin to personalism and has some affinities with pragmatism.[124]

Existentialism has had an unfading influence upon contemporary theology and as a result, it has come to certain meeting points. Soren Kierkegaard was inclined to awaken Christians to what he called the "Existential meaning of the Gospel". For Kierkegaard Chistianity is not a body of truths or doctines to which we give intellectual assent; it is something that demands a life-commitment from us. Religious faith, Kierkegaard says, "belongs to and has its home in the existential......it has nothing to do with knowledge .....Faith expresses a relation from personality to personality." The Christian God is not an object we know about; He is a person who invites a personal interest and commitment from us. And to be a Christian is precisely to adopt a certain fundamental attitude or "life-style,"[125] The existential thinking of Kierkegaard had a lasting impression upon contemporary Christian theology. Barth, Baultmann, Tillich, Rahner bear the Kierkegaardian mark. One can also see the glimpses of existential trends in the works of Jewish thinker Buber. The existentialism of Martim Heidegger has also had a dominating influence on contemporary theology. Although Heidegger has drawn a demarcation line between his position and that of Sartrean atheism, yet his vision of man uncompromisingly stresses man's finitude. For Heidegger, death is the absolute reality and man's whole existence is dominated by it. "To live Authentically" means that human existence is an "existence oriented-towards-death". A commentator of Heidegger has expressed it thus : "The man who exists authentically, resolutely anticipates death, orders his day-to-day possibilities in the light of

124. Ibid., p. 139.

125. Max Charlesworth : The Existentialists and Jean-Paul Sartre, p. 66.

this capital possibility, and finds joy in this mode of life."[126] Macquarrie further states that Heidegger's religious view of death can be given a Christian meaning. According to Heidegger the anxiety of death awakens human beings to the wonder of existence, and Macquarrie claims that this wonder that anything exists is a kind of preparation for eternal life before God's revelation.[127]

Sin and Original Sin

The most baffling and controversial religious category is the concept of sin. The existential religious idea of human finitude is founded upon his conception of sin. The principal doctrines or the origin and nature of sin and evil vary between two-extremes—those of Schopenhaurian pessimism and Pantheistic optimism. Schopenhaur holds that pain is the fundamental and positive condition of existence and evil is inseparable from human nature. He interprets the inmost nature of the universe in terms of the will which in its blind craving progresses from pain to satisfaction and from satisfaction to ennui. Thus life oscillates between the poles of pain and ennui.[128] But the Pantheistic view of evil, denying the essentially painful character of existence, maintains that evil is simply a mode in which certain aspects of the world are apprehended by human consciousness. There is no place in Pantheism for an ultimate distinction between good and bad. For Spinoza (1632-1677)—the best exponent of the Pantheistic doctrine, the distinction between good and bad, is simply relative distinction.[129] The Buddhist doctrine is very similar to that of Schopenhaur. The Buddha explains that evil is the product of desire and

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126. J. Jacquarrie : Studies in Christian Existentialism, S.C.M. Press, 1966, p. 55.

127. Ibid., p. 67.

128. See World as Will and Power (1819).

129. See the Ethics (1677).

passion.[130] While the orthodox Christian teaching is different from both pessimism and optimism and while sin, interpreted as moral evil, the Christian existential view inclines more to the Schopenhaurian one, although the former differs from the latter, in making the will the source of sin. Writing about Schopenhaur Kierkegaard himself observes, "I am astonished to find an author who, in spite of complete disagreement touches me at so many points."[131] Besides this, the resemblance between the two doctrines is dim and the difference is obvious. The explanation of sin presented by Schopenhaur, as intrinsic to human reality, is devoid of freedom of will. This theory leads to psychological determinism and evil turns into a natural and authentic fact. But the Christian existential thinkers stress the freedom of will. Though sin may be inherited, moral freedom is intact. And the consciousness of sin begins with the consciousness of moral freedom. The deliberate emphasis on sin begins with St. Augustine. Augustine insists on the voluntary nature of sin. "An act is not sin at all if it be not voluntary."[132] Further, Augustine insisted that sin originates due to a pitiful necessity. Thus, we see in Augustine's doctrine of sin a psychological determinism together with theological necessitarianism. This contradiction inherent in maintaining simultaneously indetermission and necessitarianism is solved by Augustine with the help of doctrine of original sin.[133] The Christian

130. Lord Buddha Treats of Evil in The Fire Sermon. See : Buddhism in Translation, trans. Henry Clarke Warren (Harvard Oriental Series).
131. See ; The Journals of Kierkegaard, trans. Alexander Dru (London : Geofrey Oxford University Press), 1951, pp. 502. ff.
132. H. R. Machintosh, "Sin", Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics Ed. James Hastings (New York : Charles Scribners Sons, 1951), XI, 539.
133. A. G. George : (ed.) T. S. Eliot : His Mind and Art, Asia Publishing House, 1962, p. 59.

conception of original sin can only be properly known in relation to both the Christian conception of personal God and also to a state of spiritual perfection in which state man had not been spiritually alienated from God. This misfortune, variously designated as "Original sin" or "Fall", arose as a result of the freedom of choice which the human mind had in its state of original perfection. And on account of original sin man was separated from God; the state of this separation in the condition of man's sinfulness; it is sin itself. Thus the Christian existential notion of sin and original sin have to be grasped in relation to the other concepts of a transcendental and personal, "wholly other", and the essential freedom of human will. Augustine writes"......without doubt wickedness can be a flaw or vice only where the nature previously was not vitiated. And therefore departure from God would be no vice, unless in a nature whose duty it was to abide with God."[134]

In spite of the fact that Augustine's ideas on sin underwent many changes, he always associates sin with sensuality and concupiscence. It is the preponderance of passion over wisdom. Mankind has disobeyed God (through Adam). Hence human body rebels against him in passion. Thus passion and sin are related. Concupiscence is the sequel of sin.[135] After St. Augustine, Soren Kierkegaard attached the same significance to the Category of sin in religious thought. According to Kierkegaard, "......the consciousness of sin is *conditio sine qua non* of Christianity."[136] In The Concept of Dread, he examines the origin of sin. "By the qualitative leap sin came into the world and in this way it is continually coming into it."[137] For him the consciousness of God is associated with the consciousness

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134. St. Augustine : The City of God, I, 456.
135. A. G. George : (ed.) T. S. Eliot : His Mind and Art, op. cit., p. 60.
136. Soren Kierkegaard : The Journals, trans. op. cit., entry., No. 479, p. 131.
137. Soren Kierkegaard : The Concept of Dread, p. 99.

of sin. He writes : "What the contemplation of nature is for the first (human) consciousness of God, the contemplation of Revelation is for the second immediate consciousness of God (Consciousness of sin)."[138]

The conception of original sin is invarially related to the myth of the Fall, narrated in Genesis. Where the Fall is historically true or whether it is a myth does not matter. It is clear from the ups and downs of humanity that there is something inexplicably and radically wrong with human nature. Otherwise, where is evil ? Sin is radically unintelligible and irrational. It may vaguely and tentatively be defined "as indifference or opposition to the will of God, refusal of faith and love."[139] Further more, "At bottom, sin is a religious idea which cannot be properly defined but by putting it expressly in relation to God."[140] On deeper analysis, it seems that the Christian doctrine of incarnation becomes fruitful only if the concept of original sin is admitted to be valid. The incarnation of God proves fruitless if man can save himself. J. S. Whale presents a glorious account in the following lines : "The idea of a Fall from an original state of perfection is really a limiting conception... The Fall is a symbolism necessary to the intellect, but inconceivable by the imagination......Man's tragic apostasy for God is not something which happened once for all a long time ago. It is true in every moment of existence. If you believe in the creation, you must go on to believe in the Fall. The symbolism of the one is a necessary complement to the symbolism of the other...Christian anthropology affirms the notorious conflict between man's recalcitrant will, and that divine purpose in which alone man and his world find their true meaning. It describes that agelong misdirection of human life which is the very presupposition of the Gospel. Any other pre-supposi-

138. Soren Kierkegaard : The Journals, op. cit., p. 131.
139. H. R. Machintosh : "Sin", Encyclopaedia of Religion And Ethics, Vol. XI, p. 541.
140. Ibid., p. 541.

tion would make the glorious Gospel of the blessed God meaningless."[141] The following description of sin framed by Mackintosh bears resemblance with the Hulme-Eliot notion of sin, "sin at bottom is pride, while the form in which the perverted will takes in very human being is concupiscence or lust. Any sin is 'mortal' which turns away from God."[142]

Christian exponents frequently and emphatically point out the irreconcilability of tragedy with Christianity. Writes Karl Jaspers : "The believing Christian no longer recognises tragedy as genuine. Redemption has occured and is perpetually renewed through grace."[143] The great theologist Reinhold Neibuhr agrees with this; "Christianity is a religion which transcends tragedy.........The cross is not tragic but the resolution of tragedy."[144] Lawrence Michel in an article entitled "The Possibilities of a Christian Tragedy" analyses the problem more thoroughly. He defines the tragic frame of mind, the tragic sense of life, and concludes that while they can co-exist with natural religions, they cannot exist with Christianity. "Profo und ambiguity in the sense of evil; human life as a predicament; stand ing under judgement; assurances called into question—these things generate the tragic frame of mind, the tragic sense of life."[145] He further observes : "But Christians believe in the efficiency of the Incarnation and Resurrection and the Redemption; that the hegemony of the devil was destroyed once and for all. The Gordian Knot has been cut."[146] And

141. J. S. Whale : Christian Doctrine, pp. 51-52.
142. H. R. Machintosh : "Sin", Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, XI, 540.
143. Karl Jaspers : Tragedy is not Enough, Trans. Harald : A. T. Reiche and Others (Londons Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1953), p. 82.
144. Reinhold Neibuhr : Beyond Tragedy. (London : Nisbet and Co. Ltd., 1938), p. 155.
145. Lawrence Michel : The Thought, Fordham University Journal, XXXI (September, 1956), p. 428.
146. Ibid., p. 428.

consequently, he sums up; "In whatever...terms Christian optimism expresses itself...there is a basic incompatiability between the tragic and the Christian view. And nothing has yet come forth which can be called without cavil both Christian and tragedy at the same time."[147] Viewed from a critical approach, this tragic concept of life in Christianity suffers from serious objection. For the tragic cannot co-exist with any one of the living religions if we accept this view of human life. Practically it is a passing shadow, a changing phase. We come across various glimpses of optimistic trends in Hinduism. For instance, the Bhagavad Gītā fosters the same optimism as that of Christianity. The doctrine embedded in it transcends both evil and suffering. The following verses of the Gītā may be compared with the essential doctrine of Christianity : "Arjun, you grieve over those who should not be grieved for, and yet speak like the learned; wise men do not sorrow over the dead or the living.

In fact there was never a time when I was not, or when you or these kings were not. Not is it a fact that here after we shall cease to be."[148]

and again

"Surrending all duties to Me, seek refuge in Me alone, I shall absolve you of all sins; grieve not."[149] Is there any possibility for tragedy in the light of these doctrines ?

Inspite of all, the tragedies and religions have co-existed from the very dawn of human civilization. Here is a strange paradox.

On closer and deeper analysis there looks a distinction between the tragic sense and the tragic vision. It is the tragic sense that is common both to Christianity and to the Christian

147. Ibid., p. 428.
148. Bhagavad Gītā : Chapter II, Verses 11, 12.
149. Ibid., Chap. XVIII, Verse 66.

tragedies. But there is no place in Christianity for the tragic vision. It belongs to the various schools of the philosophy of pessimism than to religions. Nietzsche and Schopenhaur have the tragic vision. In the first place the tragic vision sees no escape for man either in time or beyond it from the pain and suffering to which he is condemend. In the second place, it is unable to give any meaningful interpretation of life. It leads to irredeemable despair, without envisaging the possibility of an escape from despair into a life of faith.[150] The tragic sense, on the other hand, leads to no vision of despair and meaninglessness. It springs from the experience of human finitude, from the sense of guilt, of sin, of anxiety, of "the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to." The tragic sense poses no problems, gives no solutions. For the religious person the tragic sense finally gives the vision of beatitude, of felicity, and of the peace, Hamlet's words to Haratio, "If thou didst ever hold me in the heart.

Absent thee from felicity a while.
And this harsh world draw thy breath in pain.

To tell my story...", present before us the burning example of tragic sense. But the vision of felicity does not give occasion for any hypocritical optimism, nor does it diminish the pangs of afflicted world. But when Shakespeare says in King Lear :

"As flies to wanton boys are we to the Gods :
They kill us for their sport;"

And when he says in Macbeth;

"Life's but a walking shadow...a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing,"

we have glimpses of tragic vision. Hamlet is a Christian tragedy for it presents only the tragic sense of life. Neither King Lear nor Macbeth is Christian. They proceed from a tragic

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150. A. G. George : T. S. Eliot. His Mind and Art, op. cit., p. 152.

sense to a tragic vision which is inconsistent with Christianity. Practically speaking, this tragic sense of life is the fundamental attitude of existential Christianity. One must learn to weep, says Miguel de Unamune in his Tragic Sense of Life. He observes in the chapter entitled "The Essence of Catholicism", that the realisation of the tragic sense of life is the essence of Catholicism too.[151] Under the same impression, T. S. Eliot appears to agree with Unamuno in making the tragic sense fundamental to the Christian world-view. It is the same as the Catholic philosophy of disillusion."[151] Suffering is deeply ingrained in his temporal existence of man. However, Christianity does not explain, nor solve "the problem of suffering."[152] The Christian message is one of optimism and immortal hope. But "...Christian optimism is not a document which can be signed, sealed, and delivered to a suffering world to solve the problem of suffering."[153] Christianity, on the other hand, opens a new dimension of experience to suffering. It only transforms suffering from a problem to a mystery, which is neither solved nor solvable, for in reflecting on a mystery we tend inevitably to degrade it to the level of a problem."[154] And as Gabriel Marcel rightly explains "This is particularly clear in the case of the problem of evil."[155] This definition of mystery as "a problem which encroaches upon its own data",[156] exactly gives the distinction between a problem and a mystery. Thus, a mystery is simply confronted, not analysed.

The relation between Christianity and tragedy is best approached through suffering. The importance of suffering to the

151. Miquel de Unamuno : Tragic Sense of Life, p. 62.
152. T. S. Eliot : "Dante", Selected Essays, p. 275.
153. T. B. Kilpatrick, "Suffering", Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (ed.), op. cit., XII, 9.
154. Gabriel Marcel : The Philosophy of Existence, trans. Manya Harari (London : The Harvile Press, 1954), p. 8.
155. Ibid., p. 9.
156. Ibid., p. 8.

tragic action has been recognised from the time of Aristotle.[157] Existential thinkers make suffering the essence of tragedy just as they make the tragic sense essential to Christianity. For them tragic suffering and tragic sense are inseparable. Kierkegaard says: "The tragic action always has an element of action, the aesthetic lies in the relativity of these."[158] And when he elucidates that: "......the appearance of Christ in a certain sense (in another sense it is infinitely) the deepest tragedy, because Christ came in the fullness of time. He bore the sins of the world."[159] The optimistic conscience of the "typical" Christian is likely to revolt. Christianity, far from making tragedy impossible, adds a new dimension of meaning to tragedy by it's transformation of the problems of "life" and "suffering" into mysteries. Life now becomes a predicament. There are no "solutions", but only existential "choices."[160]

(D) Existentialism and Humanism

'Humanism' may be defined as a theory according to which there can be no 'Reality' higher than 'Man'. Humanism consists of a philanthropic outlook which is based on equality, fraternity and freedom. It is a theory which "essentially tends to render man more truly human and to make his original greatness manifest by causing him to participate in all that can enrich him in nature and history..."[161] Humanism may be

157. See Poetics, XI, 6.
158. Kierkegaard : Either/Or, trans. David F. Swenson and Lillian M. Swenson (London : Humprey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 122.
159. Ibid., p. 116.
160. A. G. George : T. S. Eliot : His Mind and Art, op. cit., p. 155.
161. Jacques Maritain : True Humanism, trans. by Adamson : London, Geoffrey Bles, 6th ed. 1954, Intro., p. XII.

Theocentric or Anthropocentric. "The first kind of humanism recognises that the centre for man is God; it implies the Christian conception of man as at once a sinner and redeemer, and the Christian conception of grace and freedom... The second kind of humanism believes that man is his own centre, and therefore the centre of all things. It implies a naturalistic conception of man and freedom.[162] Unlike Aristotle, the medieval thinkers do not define man simply as a *rational animal* ; for them, man is a spiritual being who aspires after a life *beyond*, and who, being a living animal, "most often lives, not by his soul, but by his senses."[163] The medieval thinkers regard man also as a person. The term 'person' has been defined as "a unity of spiritual nature endowed with freedom or choice and so forming a whole which is independent of the world, for neither nature nor the State may invade his unity without permission."[164] Even God who determines the course of his universe "acts there in a peculiar way and with a supremely exquisite delicacy, a delicacy which shows the value He sets on it. He respects this freedom, in the heart of which nevertheless He lives; He solicits it, but he never compels."[165] Further, man as a historical existent was depicted as "a being out of joint and wounded,—wounded by the devil with the wound of concupiscence and by God's wound of love."[166] He, on the one hand, was burdened with 'the burden of original sin', and is deprived of 'the gift of grace', even though 'the substance of his being' is not infected by the *sin*, and, on the other hand, "he is made for a supernatural end : to see God as God beholds Himself",[167] and to participate in the Divine Life. From the standpoint of existence, therefore, man may be regarded as both a 'natural' and a 'supernatural' being simultaneously.

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162. Ibid., p. 19.
163. Ibid., p. 2.
164. Ibid., p. 2.
165. Ibid., p. 2.
166. Ibid., p. 2.
167. Ibid., pp. 2-3.

Every individual is, viewed in this perspective, a person—a spiritual being—'endowed with freedom of choice'. He is a historical existent, suffering the consequences of the 'original sin'; he is also a being spontaneously seeking salvation—the ultimate goal of life. Some Protestants, Luther, Calvin and others, however, raise their voice against the Catholic view that the Church is the only medium through which man has to seek God. They emphasise the 'original sin' and hold that it is due to the 'original sin' that man has been deprived of the freedom of will. They characterise man as a "walking corruption" that cries for God's Grace and salvation. In brief, it is known as the doctrine of (Calvinian) predestination. In solution to the recurring problem, it has been expressed that all "good and salutary acts are devided, duplicated, shared out between God and man. To each there are two sides, one belonging to God alone, one to man alone. Thus the Christian can hold that in one respect he also has a *primary* initiative in the good that he does."[168] Though the human being, in accordance with Christian humanism, has conviction in God and in Grace, yet "he claims his own share in the primary initiative with regard to salvation and to acts—that merit eternal life", [169] and he himself is the builder of his earthly life, "God and man stand together at the wheel of the ship of his destiny, and so far as the direction is in his hands, it is not in the hands of God."[170] Thus the religious humanist points the supremacy of God and side by side lays due emphasis on human freedom. In the eyes of religious humanist, man as *fastened* to God, is essentially a *real* man; and such a real person can prove a true humanist.

The theistic existentialists have been influenced by Religious Humanism, in so far as they regard God as Ultimate Reality and proclaim individual freedom. Consequently, they keep themselves aloof from the doctrine of Calvinian predestination ,

168. Ibid., p. 11.
169. Ibid,, p. 11.
170. Ibid., p. 11.

even though they in the footprints of the Protestants dislike the authority of the Catholic Church. The anthropocentric humanists, on the other hand, deny God and speak exclusively for man and his freedom. "Man is the measure of all things." Says Protogoras. This remark, though simple, expresses the keynote of sophism. By 'man' Protogoras meant, not all men' or men in general, but an individual man. And by measure of all things he meant 'standard of truth' of all things. Here truth was considered to be subjective. Further, Protogoras himself admitted his ignorance about existence of God. There seemed a possibility for a successful life without knowledge of God.. Man should be concerned more with the problems of life than with the problem relating to God's existence. Renaissance Humanism (sixteenth century) is a revolt against the monastic ideals of the Middle Ages. In the eyes of Renaissance Humanists, ethical ideal was more dominant than religious faith. For them, self-realization is the summum bonum of life. We should rather make the most of our present life by making proper use of our talents. The humanists to this age therefore hold that God should be defined "wholly in terms of human ideals and social principles."[171]

Here, it is not out of place to refers to Buddhism and Jainism. "The Buddhists and Jainas do not depend upon God", the systems they develop are "directed to the great eternal truth in every religion to evolve a God out of man."[172] Graeco-Roman humanism at the same time prescribes for man an ideal that consists in realisation of the possibilities in him. Man's efforts for the realization of possibilities constitute the precondition for his becoming a man proper. "It is the reflection of this effort in literature, literary criticism, and art which

171. Hunter Mead : Types and Problems of Philosophy, 3rd ed., U. S. A., p. 415.

172. Swami Vivekanand : Chicago Address, 'Paper on Humanism', 1983, Advaita Ashram, Calcutta, 1968, pp. 35-36.

constitutes 'humanism' in its oldest sense."[173] Humanism of this type makes a positive study of man. It is entirely based on the bare facts of human life, and that is why it is called Factual Humanism. The Vedic (Hindu) religion preaches us that we should always strive towards what is dormant in us, so as to attain perfection. "The Hindu religion does not consist in struggles and attempts to believe a certain doctrine or dogma, but in realizing—not in believing, but in being and becoming."[174] Modern Humanism is, however, mainly pragmatic and is a revival of Protogorian humanism. F. C. S. Schiller, an eminent British exponent of Pragmatism, admits with Protogoras that man is a measure of all things. For him, whatever is useful for man, is true. There is no absolute or eternal truth, as it has got no factual evidence. And "since such existence cannot be established—for it could be established only by experience, and there is no possible way we can get outside experience to find what exists' outside experience'—any statement which pretends to express trans-emperical non-human truth is meaningless.[175]

Now let us turn our attention to Naturalistic Humanism. Naturalism holds a scientific world view. The Naturalist repudiates every form of super naturalism. "This philosophy holds instead that there is only one order of existence—i. e. the natural world—and that man is a wholly natural creature whose welfare and happiness come solely from his own unaided efforts."[176] Nature simply brings forth man and is therefore indifferent to what he makes of himself out of the powers bestowed by Her on him. Nature presents us with brute facts that take place according to infallible laws and which are therefore above all values established as yet in the human world. For him, there is no life hereafter. The present life is

173. Hunter Mead : op. cit,, p. 413.
174. Swami Vivekanand : Chicago Address, p. 24.
175. Hunter Mead : op. cit., p. 414.
176. Ibid., p. 418.

the 'be all and end all' of man, although he yearns for immortality; but this desire is meaningless. The naturalist does not, however, altogether deny man's longing for immortality. "But this has no relation to the possibility of survival—that is, we cannot argue that because men have this yearning, therefore, it must be satisfied."[177] The phenomenon of death is natural and inescapable; so that every living being must accept it as the necessary culmination of his life.

In his 'Existentialism and Humanism' Sartre replies to reproaches against Existentialism. As an existentialist, he attributes existence only to man and as an atheist he denies the existence of God. If there be no God, "there is", says Sartre, "at least on being whose existence comes, before its essence, a being which exists before it can be defined by any conception of it. That being is man or, as Heidegger has it, the human reality."[178] Since 'existence precedes essence', man first of all exists as *nothing* and it is only later on that he defines himself, i. e. makes himself what he is, and therefore forms a conception of himself. And since there is no God, there remains none to preconceive his nature; so that there cannot be anything like the general human nature. "*Man simply is*. Not that he is simply what he conceives himself to be, but he is what he wills, and as he conceives himself after already existing—as he wills to be after that leap towards existence. Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself."[179] Every man has got a subjective life, and by projecting himself toward the future he is capable of being aware of his own existence. Sartre says "that man primarily exists—that man is, before all else, something which propels itself towards a future and is aware that it is doing so."[180] There is no supra-mundane absolute authority higher than the authority of an individual man. Since he

177. Ibid., p. 418.
178. Sartre : Existentialism and Humanism, p. 28.
179. Ibid., p. 28.
180. Ibid., p. 28.

has to shoulder the entire responsibility of himself, the freedom he enjoys is but a burden to him, he is condemned to be free, so to say. He is in a state of abandonment, he is forlorn, as he has got no dependable guarantor of the values of life viz; God. He is embarassed in absence of such a divine guardian of law and order. As Sartre himself puts it. "We are left alone, without, excuse. That is what I mean when I say that man is condemned to be free. Condemned, because he did not create himself, yet is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is thrown into this world he is responsible for everything he does."[181] Every individual is thus the architect of his own future. For if his future is pre-determined by any other higher Power, viz. God, that is, in fact, no future. "If, however, it means that whatever may now appear to be, there is a future to be fashioned, a virgin future that awaits him—then it is a true saying. But in the present one is forsaken."[182] We are unaided by any objective principle in formulating our future. Even feeling or passion prove fruitless in guiding us, activity shapes our feeling and also estimates its intensity and intrinsic value.

Humanism in any case, is impossible, unless there is a universal human nature that each man individually partakes of. Instead of the general human nature Sartre speaks, however, of the universality of the human condition. But that does not solve the problem. Because none can deny that the essence of man is constituted by his rationality as well as his sentient nature. If Sartre refuses to admit this, he cannot consistently maintain that by choosing for himself a man chooses for others as well, nor can he justify his notion of "inter-subjectivity". He cannot, for instance says : "I am thus responsible for yourself and for all men, and I am creating a certain image of man as I would have him to be. In fashioning myself I fashion

181. Ibid., p. 34.
182. Ibid., p. 34-35.

man."[183] On ground, there being no general human nature, one exists by differentiating oneself from, and not by positively relating oneself to others, it cannot be maintained that by choosing for himself an individual chooses for others as well, or that by willing freedom for himself he at the same time wills the same for his fellow-men.[184] Apart from various criticisms levelled against him, Sartre is a thoroughgoing humanist, when he admits of no divine authority—no divine creator of the universe. In the eyes of major humanists, if there at all be any religion, that is the 'Religion of Humanity'. It is man who contemplates God—the Ideal of Perfection—and pursues that in a way determined by himself. Each of us must realize that man occupies a lofty position in the universe and that he has an important role to play. Sartre says, "Not that we believe God does exist but we think that real problem is not that of His existence; what man needs is to find himseif again and to understand that nothing can save him from himself, not even valid proof of the existence of God."[185]

(E) Existentialism and Marxism

The day-by-day problems of human existence have been tackled by Marxism and Existentialism, more or less, with equal emphasis. Sartre has made an approach to the problems and concludes that Materialism is enlivened by revolution. He finds that a true revolutionary demands a philosophy which will do the following :—

(i) Explain history, society, man and values as transient, not guided by any Providence, and capable of being changed for the better.

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183. Ibid., p. 30.
184. Vide, Sailesh Ranjan Bhattacharya : An Enquiry into the Fundamentals of Existentialism, Firma Klm Pvt. Ltd. Calcutta, 1979, pp. 112-135.
185. Sartre : Existentialism and Humanism, p. 56.

(ii) Remove any special divine privileges for all men and so produce natural equality for all, which is but another definition for the better.

(iii) Make action the means of both understanding and changing the world, and explain reality as a material fact and not some abstract idealistic concept.

(iv) Give man freedom and ability to make his own laws, values, ends; to transcend the present situation and to carve his own pathway into a future that is not determined.[186] Sartre says that revolutionaries like Epicurus, Lucretius and many others have often favoured a materialistic philosophy in order to bring about a thorough uplift in society. Sartre, on the one hand, acknowledges his debt to materialism maintains that "materialism is a liability rather than an asset to a philosophy of revolution." Beginning with the first point, he finds that the revolutionary marches ahead of his existing situation to a new one, looking into history as a process, a progressive movement, and condemns the idealistic tendency to see changes in the world as changes in ideas : "death, unemployment, strike-suppression, poverty and hunger are not ideas. They are everyday realities that are experienced in horror."[187]

Secondly, as a worker, in order to give birth to a historical transition, he must root out all providential, divine interference with or guidance of history and society, rejecting any claims of the ruling class to divine rights and privileges. History, man and values must all be made natural and relative. He emphatically declares that he, too, is a man akin to all other men, equipped with the equal right and ability to act. Thus, "his humanism is not based on human dignity, but, on the contrary, denies man any particular dignity."[188] He reduces all men to

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186. Odajnyk, Walter : Marxism and Existentialism, Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1965, p. 67.
187. Sartre : Materialism and Revolution, p. 246.
188. Ibid., p. 232.

human species. Thirdly, he must not be compelled to bend before the supremacy of knowledge as a contemplation of the universe, for such a vision produces a conservative, static view of the world and society; instead, he must develop a theory of knowledge which unites thought and action and shows "that action is the unmasking (understanding) of reality, and, at the same time, a modification of that reality."[189]

Fourthly, the revolutionary must be unencumbered by any determinism, either divine or philosophical, so that he can be set free from his embarassing situation and create his own laws in the development of a better situation for future. Contrary to this, Sartre proclaims that he wants to set up rational human organisation to replace what nature had brought forth blindly. "The Marxist expression for designating the society of the future is *antiphysis*. This means that Marxists want to set up a human order whose laws will constitute the negation of natural laws. And we are probably to understand by this that this order will be produced only by obeying the prescriptions of nature. But the fact is that this order must be conceived within a Nature that denies it; the fact is that in the anti-natural society the conception of law will precede the establishment of law, whereas, at present, law, according to materialism, conditions our conception of it."[190] Further, materialism stands by the revolutionary by explaining the "upper by the lower", and in this fashion it portrays the entire society. Sartre concludes that materialism proves fruitless in fulfilling the demands of revolutionary philosophy. However, idealism itself is not the remedy either, for it is mainly a conservative point of view towards the universe and somewhat subtle and abstract to be useful; for example, when it dreams of a freedom it cherishes it as an internal condition and not an external fact. Thus idealism plays a deceptive role against revolutionary, because "it binds him with rights and values that are already given; it

189. Ibid., p. 229.
190. Ibid., p. 234.

conceals from him his power to blaze his own path. But materialism, by robbing him of his freedom, also deceives him. Revolutionary philosophy should be a philosophy of transcendence."[191] In support of his thesis Sartre quotes Marxism as declaring that each generation invariably invites new ideas and social theories. He quotes Stalin as claiming that Marxism—Leninism is strong enough to fulfil the empirical demands of the generation. Marxism with its materialism involves pragmatic and relative truth. But then, if, Marxism is viewed as an opinion, whose truth is measured in its power of action, it is a baffling opinion, and therefore: "Carries within it its own destruction, for it is obliged; in the very name of its principles, to regard itself as an objective fact, as a reflection of being, as an object of science, and, at the same time, it destroys the science which should analyse and establish it—at best as an opinion. The circle is obvious, and the whole system remains suspended in air, perpetually floating between being and nothingness."[192] The way out of the circle for the Marxist is through faith. "He believes in Marx, Lenin and Stalin, he admits the principle of authority, and finally, he retains the blind and tranquil faith in the certitude of Marxism."[193]

The religious aspect of Marxism has been developed by Albert Camus in 'The Rebel'. He calls Marxism a Messianism and a prophecy.[194] He views present day Marxism as having discarded the founder's critical method and turned more and more to his prophecies; instead of adapting theory to the facts Marxists now attempt to adopt facts to the prophecy: "It can be said of Marx that the greater part of his predictions came into conflict with facts as soon as his prophecies began to become an object of increasing faith. The reason is simple: the

191. Ibid., pp. 236-237.
192. Ibid., p. 119.
193. Ibid.,
194. Odajnyk, Walter : Marxism & Existentialism, op. cit., p. 87.

predictions were short-term and could be controlled...when the predictions failed to come true, the prophecies remained the only hope ; with the result that they alone rule over our history."[195] According to Camus, the origin of Marxism can be traced earlier in Christian and bourgeois world-view and ideals. There appears a close co-relation between the Marxists's and the Christian view of nature and history. "Both Marxism and Christianity consider the history of man unique and aiming towards given end; both think of nature as only the setting for the historical drama, and as a thing that must be subdued, conquered, and enslaved—certainly not passively obeyed. In this; they diverge greatly from the Greek attitude, which saw history as cycle and nature as beneficially beautiful, and a source of learning. Yet, so long as a belief existed in the divinity of Christ, a mediation between man and nature was possible. When Christ became only a symbol of the mangod, mediation ceased and the Judaic world re-appeared."[196] This type of world is a dream cultivated by Marxism. And in the new Godless-World "...the implacable god of war rules again; all beauty is insulated as the source of ideal pleasure, nature itself is enslaved. Marx, from this point of view, is the Jeremiah of the god of history and the St. Augustine to the revolution."[197] That explains, argues Camus, why a close relation exists between the Catholic reactionary philosopher De Maistre and Marx. Both put an end to the conditions between essence and existence, freedom and necessity. Both speak to man in an ambiguous manner—telling him that he must act as if he could do all things and at the same time resign himself as if he could do nothing. De Maistre justifies the established order; Marx justifies the order to come : "The most eloquent eulogy of capitalism was made by its greatest enemy. Marx is only anti-

195. Albert Camui : The Rebel, London, 1962, p. 189.
196. Odajnyk, Walter : Marxism and Existentialism, op. cit., p. 87.
197. Albert Camus : The Rebel, op. cit., pp. 190-191.

capitalist in so far as capitalism is out of date."[198] In politics, both rely upon the same methods—political realism, discipline, force.

But the similarity focussed by Camus has not been acknowledged by Marxists. Existentialism and Christianity differ radically from the Greeks in their conceptions of nature, history and individual personality. In contrast to the optimistic world-view of the Greeks in which the individual was a part of the entire cosmos, in which death was of minor importance, Christianity pessimistically saw the world as a place of suffering, of individual alienation from nature, history, society and conceived of death as the focal point of man's existence. And, mediation was achieved in the belief in a God and an eternal life; but when modern society came to doubt these beliefs, only the sombre principles remained. And it is these that Existentialism has inherited—the Judaic world without the Christian God : "...the existentialists, both of the atheistic and the religious variety, represent in fact the same position and reiterate the cruelty and perversity of the old Jehovah. They also construe the individual as alleged sovereign, but only to make him lovely, to isolate him from society, to reduce to despair and forlornness those miserable, ridiculous little worms wriggling helplessly under foot of malicious Fate with fools' crowns of sovereignty on their heads."[199] But the credit goes not to Marxism but the Existentialism that makes a god out of the individual, because Christ, the mangod, who could have uplifted all men to godhood has been rejected, the Existentialist man-god is a chained and tortured God. Consequently existentialism serves the reactionary element, either by default,

198. Ibid., p. 196.

199. Adam Scarff : "Stocktaking in Philosophy", pp. 15-16. Polish Perspectives, Vol. II, No. 11 (November, 1959), pp. 6-20 : The same article appeared under the title "Marxism and Existentialism" in Monthly Review, XIV (May-June, 1962).

as in the case of Sartre's Existentialism which generates no social theory, or by the choice, as in the case of the frankly religious existentialists.

Marxists hold that Existentialism reflects the forlorn position of the individual in the capitalist world. Existentialism developed when "the individual in the capitalist world had not only been uprooted and cut off from the social whole, but was also aware of himself as something alien to this whole and even inimical to it."[200] Further, the place of common people surrounded by a lot of encumbrances, has been assessed by Marxists in a somewhat better way than by the existentialists. "In the Existentialist description of the non-true, common place life, in which the individual is a thing rather than the real man that he is, Marxists find the representation of human relations in bourgeois society that Marx outlined a hundred years earlier. Existentialism then, discloses the crisis of bourgeois society, for it shows the incompatibility between existing social relations and human freedom, and also the individual's awareness of the hopelessness of the situation."[201] Marxists realise that the cause of man's alienation is the social structure of the capitalised society; whereas existentialists try to find the cause in man's consciousness. Marxists argue, therefore, that the change of social relations would have little or no effect upon man's existential alienation. But, with the marches of historical changes, such alienation has been proved a real possibility. Only a better change in consciousness, in accordance with Existentialism will restore man to his true existence. Here the Existentialist forget that the man's consciousness is a product of social conditions; and it is because of this refusal that Existentialism sees the hopeless but courageous acceptance or reality as the only answer to the problem of man's existence. Sisyphus in his condemnation to senseless and endless labour,

200. Pyma P. Gaidenko : "Existentialism and the Individual", Soviet Review, July, 1962, p. 23.

201. Ibid., p. 24.

is an excellent illustration of the condition of man under capitalism, and it is small wonder that Existentialism has chosen this myth of all others, as the one that best describes the existentialist plight.

The most humorous criticism of Existentialism is put up by B. Dunham, an American Marxist, writing in the Soviet philosophical Journal 'Voprosy Filosofit'—Because of immature outlook on life, the Existentialists remind Dunham of a screaming child in the hands of its mother and he adds, "please understand that I in no way write ironically. Inertia and passivity, the desire to spend the entire life at the breast of the mother is characteristic of all idealistic schools, and especially of Existentialism."[202] Further Dunham concludes: "Existentialists do not give us a description of the world or of man's place in the world, they only express their infantism which is raised to the level of metaphysics. When existentialists state that the world does not resemble the womb, they do not lie. But when they sorrow after the fact that the world does not resemble the womb, by this they announce that they as yet have not left and do not want to leave the mother's breast."[203] Through his psychological study of existentialism, Dunham says that a philosophy of tears and passivity, cannot, of courses, propose any serious social theory, and in the end it becomes reactionary: its nihilistic tone is really a preparatory course of fascism.

The Marxists have raised serious objection against the concept of 'total freedom' advocated by existentialists. They enquire as to where it is originated and what is its shape in practice. For example, Adam Schaff asks how it is possible to have a completely free individual who "depends on his own decisions alone and at the same time (is) helpless and patheti-

202. Barrows Dunham: "Existentialism", Voprosy Filosofit, XIV, No. 9 (1960), p. 65.

203. Ibid., p. 75.

cally hopeless to his struggle against a malice Fate."[204] Freedom under such conditions looks ironic and incomprehensible. In contrast to the peculiar existentialist form of freedom, Schaff observes "Marxism shows that man, making decisions which are in a sense independent, and choosing a certain attitude or field of activity, always makes these decisions socially in that his personal models are socially determined, that his foundations are, as Marx once said, a social product and that, from this standpoint, the individual belongs, in fact, to a definite form of society."[205]

The concept of alienation invented and established by Existentialism is not whole-heartedly acceptable. To some extent it seems the opposite of freedom. The elaborate definition of alienation constituted and set up by Marx is convincing and worth mentioning. "...a historical phenomenon arising out of the division of labour and reacting its culmination and zenith in the capitalist society, where man becomes an object, becomes identified with and ruled by the products he himself creates, and in so doing becomes estranged from his true and real consciousness, from his work from others, and from society." Further he based the concept of alienation on the distinction between existence and essence, "On the fact that man's existence is alienated from his essence, that in reality, he is not what he potentially is, or, to put it differently, that he is not what he ought to be..."[206] Marx was to some extent, successful in framing a concrete and realistic background for the removal of alienation.

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204. Adam Schaff: "Stocktaking in Philosophy", p. 12.
205. Ibid., p. 20.
206. Marx's Concept of Man, Erich Fromm, (ed.), New York (1961). p. 47.

CHAPTER-THIRD

Living Issues in Existentialism

Philosophy of Mere Finiteness and Temporality

The existentialist revolt of thought makes a "surrender to finiteness" which is a product of "an intellectual scepticism that liquidated all metaphysical terms of reference. Thus the term 'finiteness' receives a new sanction, a new dignity; for it is meant to bear the whole weight of eternity."[1] Rilke likewise holds that this finiteness must assume all that had once been God's prerogative. Along with Nietzsche, he regards the transcendence of a personal God as a threat to the inner-worldly dignity of man.[2] Nietzsche, too 'demands the return of beauty and sublimity as the property of man and his finest apology'. Life is full of divine dignity and is eternal, adorable necessity of being,

> "Not tainted by any No,
> eternal Yes of being,
> I am thy Yes eternally."[3]

Heidegger speaks of the "World" as character of Dasein, he means that this world 'is neither there not at hand, but originates in temporality'. Such finiteness has been seriously emphasised in the vast literature of Sartre, in which, condemned to freedom, man must make his decision without any antecedent value or goal. First there exists a finite man, only later does he fully gain his positive essence. 'Oreste[4] knows that he is free', free also from any possible guilt. The philosophy of pure

1. J. Von Rintelen : Beyond Existentialism, p. 24.
2. R. M. Rilke : Brief aus Muzot, p. 185 (1935).
3. Quoted in J. Von Rintelen : Beyond Existentialism, p. 25.
4. Sartre : Les Mouches II, 2.

finiteness affects our very roots : 'being directed towards death' is the fundamental existential of our Dasein (Heidegger). This is 'death dwelling through time', therefore 'we live always taking leave', we 'the most disappearing'.[5] Even classical antiquity was conscious of this destruction, especially, 'goddesses are weeping because the beautiful passes away and the perfect dies'.[6] For this reason, Plato went in quest of the supra-temporal idea, and similarly, in Goethe's Iphegenia Orestes says of our ever-changing earthly life : "It is the way of death that we are trading : with every step my soul becomes more silent." The prevailing situation which prepared a mighty platform for existentialist revolt may be characterised under five headings : depersonalizing, faithless reification (Versachlichung), levelling down, hallowing through constant noise, sham in almost all spheres and surrender to the instincts. These are opposed by the demand for personality, the ordering of one's own proper world according to value, interior worth, authenticity and intellectual vitality.[7]

Existential thinkers conceive man as radically imperilled and Dasein in all its burdensomeness, stands in clear contradiction to a former idealistically-optimist view of the world. Optimism appears as a 'truely wicked way of thought', as it did to Schopenhaur. But what else remains to him who can find no way out, 'but to scream or—to be silent'?—(Karl Barth). Hence according to Rene Grousset, the God Shiva who performs the cosmic dance among skulls seems to be the true image especially of our world, and at the same time 'humanity too, dances among bursts of laughter and sobs'.[8] The fundamental categories of its attitude are well-summarised by the Bulgian philosopher A. de Waelhens. These are, according to

5. Rilke, Elagien VIII, 5; IX, I.
6. Illiad, 18, 117.
7. J. Von Rintelen : Beyond Existentialism, p. 99.
8. Rene Grousset : Bilance de ?, historire, (Paris, 1946).

him, 'contingency (tragic) necessity, (unlimited) freedom, loneliness and absurdity'.[9] A tragic view of the World and deliberate meaninglessness lead man to the brink of despair.

Glimpses of Transcendence as Visible in Existential Thinking

To-day we have become over-realistic; we see rather the dark side of life, are very sober and yet capable of realizing the gentle action of transcendent power. Our contemporary thinkers want to remain 'this-worldly idealists'. The dogma of this new, one-sided attitude is the 'surrender to pure finiteness', affirmation of finiteness without selection and substraction', 'finiteness and transitoriness themselves have infinite value'. 'Transcendence is placed within immanance'. Such are valuations of our time. In Sartre, e. g., transcendence is only a linguistic covering without a proper idea belonging to it, signifying only man's ability to choose freely. For Heidegger transcendence is already existential 'crossing'. According to Rilke, we remain subject to the earthly God. Jaspers demands a transcendence that surpasses immanence, but because of our finiteness we perish as individuals with the stroke of finite events. Heidegger says that transcendence is 'the essence of the subject', the 'fundamental structure of subjectivity'. Heidegger's thought and being are meant to remain 'finite thought'. Often Heidegger's thought seems to be similar to Hegel, as in his dialectical method, in his urge to the whole that transcends the subject-object relationship. To a certain extent, he is Hegel ridiculous without speculative impetus, but rather determined by the metaphysical scepticism of Kant.

Contemporary thinkers overlook the fullness of the spirit and the riches of life. Our philosophers deny the ontological statements on the mood of Angst (and despair) as the ultimate answer. Thus deprived of authentic transcendence, we are confronted with the hopelessness. Marcel suggests that the

9. A. de Waelhens : Der Roman des Existentialisms, p. 147, Universitas, I. 8, 1946.

modern devaluation of all finite being originates only seemingly in a humility that accepts the nothingness of our world. Absolute hope in an ontological factor (repere ontologique) and the only answer to the divine Thou (devant le Tri absulu), which no longer knows the almost identical loneliness and despair. Thus hope affects deliverance. Hope is the inspiration which, like joy, carries us through the darkness.[10] Jaspers, too, suggests that the imperfectibility of finiteness, the 'failure of every form of truth in the world actually apprehends transcendence', indeed, is like a 'proof of God'.[11] That which belongs to the sphere of value ultimately tends to a perfect, unconditioned value, which does not impair the autonomy of the individual value but elevates it.[12] By virtue of its inner essential tendency every finite value points to the ideal fulfilment of the value of all values which is Deus bonum omnis boni.[13] Due emphasis has been laid upon the uniqueness and primacy of existence—the inner, immediate experience of self-awareness. Reality, i.e., being in existence that is found in the "I" rather than "it". In his play Caligula, Albert Camus has one of characters say: "To lose one's life is a little thing and I shall have the courage to do so if it is necessary; but to see the meaning of life dissipated, to see our reason for existing disappear, that is what is unbearable. One cannot live without meaning."

Hermeneutic of Existence

Heidegger approves the relevance of human historicity, when he writes : "The phenomenology of Dasein is hermeneutic in the original meaning of the word...This being is in himself historical; thus the unique ontological illumination of this

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10. Homo Viator, Prolegumenes a' une metaphysique de le's-pe'rance, pp. 62-3, 71, 91, Paris, 1944.
11. Jaspers : Vernunft und Existenz, p. 68, (1935).
12. J. Hessen : "Autonomic und Theonomic" (in Sammburg, III, 2; 1948).
13. Augustine, De trin, VIII C. 3, n. 4.

being necessarily becomes a "historical interpretation"[14] He explains the same point in one of his latter essays when he states that the essence of truth is "not the empty 'generality' of an 'abstract universality' but rather the unveiling of the meaning of the individual and uniquely historical."[15] The existentialists are dealing with history in a more fundamental sense of *lived* history—what Kierkegaard designates as "internal" history in distinction from "external" one, and what in Greek language is denoted by the word Geschichte in contrast to Historie.

To some extents the distinction between Kierkegaard and Heidegger looks apparent. Kierkegaard is primarily concerned with existence as it is experience in man's concrete ethico-religious situation. Heidegger is interested in deriving an ontological analysis of man. He makes it clear that Being can never be investigated as something which is "in-itself". "The task of an existentialist analysis of Dasein with regard to its possibility and necessity", says Heidegger, "is already indicated in its ontic constitutions... The existentialist analysis is finally rooted in the existential, i. e., ontic."[16] Further, Heidegger "Speaks of structural possibilities as being *a priori* and transcendental, thus indicating his dependence or the transcendental philosophy of Kant. But Heidegger does not mean by a priori and transcendental something which precedes the concrete; rather, concepts circumscribe the ever-present structure of the concrete. In Heidegger's hermeneutic of Dasein they define the horizon of man's concrete, historical possibilities."[17] Kierkegaard describes the self as related to itself in the consciousness of an infinite passion. Heidegger describes as that being who is concerned for his Being. Speaking clearly, Augustine, with

14. Heidegger : S. Z., pp. 38, 39.
15. Heidegger : Von Wesen der Wahrheit (Frankfurt : Vittorio Klostermann, 1943), p. 16.
16. Heidegger : S. Z., pp. 12-13.
17. Ibid.

his doctrine of illumination or truth as indwelling, is in the background of Heidegger's existentialism especially, on this point. A formulation similar to that of Heidegger is given by Paul Tillich. Tillich proposes that "Whenever man has looked at his world, he has found himself in it as a part of it. But he has realized that he is a stranger in the world of objects, unable to penetrate it beyond a certain level of scientific analysis. And there he has become aware of the fact that he himself is the door to the deeper level of reality, that in his own existence he has the only possible approach to existence itself."[18] Heidegger makes us aware against a possible confusion of existance in its traditional metaphysical meaning of *existentia*. "It is precisely the ontological task to show that when we choose the term existence (Existenz) for the Being of this being, the term does not and cannot have the ontological meaning of the traditional term *existentia*. *Existentia* means ontologically on-handness, a modality which does not pertain to that being which has the character of Dasein."[19] In his letter On Humanism, Heidegger uses the hyphenated word, "Ek-sistence", which has the special meaning of "standing-out", "being ecstatic", or "being projected. "Ek-sistence, ecstatically conceived, is neither materially nor normally related to *existentia*. Ek-sistence means to stand out in the truth of Being. Existentia, on the other hand, means actually reality in contradictions to pure possibility as Idea."[20] Paul Tillich has called our attentton to the meaning of the Latin root *existere*, which indicates the notion of "emergence (heraustreten)."[21] Heidegger has properly utilized this root meaning of existence in his analysis of Dasein.

18. Paul Tillich : Systematic Theology (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1951, Vol. I), p. 62.
19. Heidegger : S. Z., p. 42.
20. Heidegger : On Humanism, p. 16.
21. Paul Tillich : " Existential Philosophy ", Journal of the History of the Ideas, V (1944), p. 47.

Subjectivity, Objectivity and the World-Around

The existentialists hold that each individual, in his totality of being, is, a concrete existent *in* the world, from which he is practically inseparable. "In comparison with traditional philosophy, or with other contemporary schools of philosophy, Existentialism...seeks to bring the whole man—the concrete individual in the whole context of his every-day life, and in his total mystery and questionableness—into philosophy...... In modern philosophy particularly (philosophy since Descartes), man has figured most exclusively as a epistemological subject as an intellect that registers, sense-data, makes propositions, reasons, and seeks the certainty of intellectual knowledge, but not as the man underneath all this, who is born, suffers, and dies."[22] A mere 'rational or epistemological fragment',[23] of the whole being of an individual is incapable of representing 'the whole or integral man',[24] who is the subject proper. Unlike the epistemological knower he does not know himself as an *object*; his is an immediate awareness of himself as a subject." This kind of truth is not a truth of the intellect but of the whole man. Strictly speaking, subjective truth is not a truth that I have, but a truth that I am."[25]

The existentialist view of 'subjectivity' is better explained in contrast with some epistemological theories which are based on the duality between the subject and object—a duality which the existentialist denies outright. Descartes in his quest of truth makes use of the sceptical method and ultimately finds out the indubitable in the 'I', i. e., the soul. Truth, then, lies nowhere else than in the 'I'—the subject-who knows himself as the object, as one, the essence of whom is thought or cons-

22. William Barrett : Irrational Man; Heinemann Ltd.; London Melbourne—Toronto, 1961, pp. 244-245.
23. Ibid., p. 245.
24. Ibid., p. 245.
25. Ibid., p. 153.

ciousness.[26] Berkley's view is a step toward Hegelian objective idealism which considers everything from the conceptual point of view. The existentialists would never posit any such objective Reality as God or the Absolute Spirit, at the cost of the individual reality. Hume's denial of innate ideas and inborn capacities suggests that every man has to be judged by his own activities which sounds like the existentialist-contention that it is by an active participation in the environment that an individual can make himself what he likes to be. Unlike the subjectivists, the existentialists do not characterise the 'subject' as the *knower*. For existentialists, to know things or objects is not the only function of the subject, nor is the subject confined within his own world of ideas. Man is not, then, a mere epistemological subject. In Kierkegaard, we meet with a concrete individual existent making his way for realization of his 'true being'. An individual's realization of his *subjectivity* in the divine Being is as good as his realization of 'truth' : Subjectivity is 'truth', says Kierkegaard. "Jaspers' reflections revolve round the main concepts : the objective world, the existing self and Being-itself (Transcendence)."[27] Jaspers strongly affirms the existence of the objective world of corporal things (Dasein) that stands over against the existing self—the subject. And 'Transcendence' is ultimate Reality, which is inclusive of the external world as well as the world of selves.[28] It may, then, be said that as a Kantian, Jaspers considers our knowledge by understanding to be confined within the phenomenal world, "and as Kierkegaardian he realizes that every concept of the Absolute

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26. Sailesh Ranjan Bhattacharya : An Enquiry into The Fundamentals of Existentialism, Firma Klm Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta, 1979, p. 29.

27. David E. Roberts : Existentialism And Religious Belief, Oxford University Press, 1959, p. 230.

28. Sailesh Ranjan Bhattacharya : An Enquiry into The Fundamental of Existentialism, p. 50.

is infracted through the existing individual."[29] For Jaspers, then, it is only in the relative sense that a finite subject can realize his subjectivity as a free ethico-religious being, who is an end in himself.[30] Gabriel Marcel postulates the primacy of Being over knowledge. He says : "Knowledge is, as it were, environed by being; it is inferior to it in a certain sense..."[31] For Marcel, Being is an ontological system. Being is not a 'problem' but is a 'mystery' to be inwardly experienced. Marcel is theist; for him, Being is identical with God. "In short, the bond between the self and Being cannot be uncovered by means of problematic approach, for this bond is sundered as soon as the subject-object split arises."[32] For Heidegger, we *men* in dread, feel ourselves relegated to the sphere of Nothing, while existing at the same time in 'What-is-in-totality' : we are, indeed, in a state of bewilderness. But as Heidegger suggests we must face the situation boldly. It is courage that "Can endure nothing : it knows, in the abyss of terror, the all—but untrodden region of Being, that 'clearing' whence everything that 'is' returns into *what* it is and is able to be." For Heidegger, 'Nothing' is not separable from Being; rather it "functions as Being." Sartre, like Heidegger, emphasises Being. For him,Being is the foundation of all knowledge. Unlike the theists, he does not identify Being with God—Being in which every individual subject finds his 'real' self.[33]

Existentialism, in general, considers Pure Thought to be an

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29. David E. Roberts : Existentialism And Religious Belief, p. 230.
30. Vide, Karl Jaspers : The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 71.
31. Gabriel Marcel : "On the ontological Mystry" in The Philosophy of Existence; tr. by M. Harari, Harvill Press, London, 1948, p. 8.
32. Roberts : Existentialism And Religious Belief, p. 285.
33. Sailesh Ranjan Bhattacharya : An Enquiry into The Fundamentals of Existentialism, pp. 57-58.

absurdity. Kierkegaard points out, "a philosophy of pure thought is for an existing individual a Chimera, if, the truth that is sought is something to exist in."[34] Besides this, the existentialists also point to the inconsistencies in Kant and Hegel. Knowledge loses all sanctity at the hands of Kant, as he contends that the 'thing-in-itself' is unknowable. And Hegel by identifying Reality with Reason or thought takes us away from the world of existence to an ideal world where thought knows itself. "Thought in abstracting from existence in a philosophy of history is dealing with itself not with existence; the actualities of becoming which make the real process and cannol be thought are lost sight of and escape, leaving the thinker with his illusion."[35] According to Kierkegaard, pure thought is but a 'fantastic hypothesis'. Existentialists believe that man to begin with is nothing or non-being. To be an existent in the true sense is to be a Being. "Being then, would not imply the essence to which existence has been added, but a determination of essence."[36] Being is therefore an existent inclusive of both of essence and the act of existing. Jaspers points to the limitations inherent it man. Although man as a free being can reach inwardness by way of transcendence, he can never reach the transcendence itself (Being-in-itself). "I think of a cipher of transcendence in the world, not of transcendence itself ..And I lose it, whenever I try to realize it as distinct from existence."[37] And in that case, as Jaspers maintains, faith in God is the only resort. According to him, Being itself is God; and He

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34. Kierkegaard : Concluding Unscientific Postscript, tr. by D. F. Swenson & Walter Lawrie, Princeton University Press, 1941, p. 275.
35. H. J. Blackham : Six Existentialist Thinkers, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1966, p. 7.
36. Michael Wyschogrod : Kierkegaard And Heidegger; Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London, 1954, p. 16.
37. Karl Jaspers : Philosophy; tr. by E. B. Ashton, University of Chicago Press, 1970, p. 106.

"cannot be encomposed by way of the historical manifestations through He speaks to man."[38] For Jaspers, then, even faith is not competent to give us knowledge of God. In fact, man can freely participate in the world of being-there, only because Being itself; i. e., God, is Transcendence.[39] In his Perennial Scope of Philosophy, Jaspers expresses that it is essential for man to know himself. Like Protagoras, he declares that "man is the measure of all things." Marcel holds that man is primarily an individual subject and as such faces problems that he seeks to solve by way of reflection. We pass beyond the subject-object relation and rise to the level of inter-subjectivity. We step into the realm of inter-subjectivity which is based on the relation of fidelity between two definite individuals. "On the plane of inter-subjectivity in being at the level of personal communion and communication."[40] Man partially realises Being in himself through his relation of fidelity with a 'thou'. At this stage fidelity or loyalty rises above its finitude and becomes absolute and eternal, and ultimately reach the realm of inter-subjectivity. And the Absolute 'Thou', the Absolute Being, is God "who is the ground of all being and value and who alone makes eternal fidelity possible."[41]

The existentialists hold that no man can exist in isolation from other existents. Though he has got the power to construct a world of his own, yet this is never conceptual; it is perceptual. As Blackham observes : "The term 'the world' should not be taken to mean 'this world' in contrast with 'the other world' or the material world as contrasted with the spiritual world; to say that man is a 'being-in-the world' means, according to Heidegger's interpretation of his philosophy, that man is open

38. Karl Jaspers : Way to Wisdom; Yale University Press 1964 p. 47.
39. David E. Roberts : Existentialism And Religious Belief, 251.
40. Copleston : Contemporary Philosophy, Burnes and Oates : London, 5th ed., 1965, p. 170.
41. Ibid., p. 170.

to Being."[42] Now, every man in his own way constitutes to the formation of the human society. Each one of us is a 'being-in-common' or a 'being-in-society', and ultimately a 'being-in-the-world'. In this connection, we can refer to 'The Wall'—one of the stories in Intimacy by Sartre. In this story, Sartre narrates the episode of three prisoners, Steinlock (Tom), Pablo Ibbieta, and Juan Mirbal, confined in the same cell and sentenced to death. Life on the earth ceases to carry any meaning for them; because, "death has disenchanted everything."[43] Sartre depicts a vivid picture of the psychical condition of each of the prisoners in the cell. Such an accurate verbal formulation of human thoughts and feelings, as Sartre's is indeed rare. Prisoners live together in the same cell and each of them is at the same time confined within his own world of thoughts peculiar to himself. Like Tom, Pablo and Juan, we are prisoners in the common cell of the universe as also within ourselves. Each of us as separate existants feel alone. We can be best aware of our existence as separate individuals, when we are in peril. For existentialists, a man is inseparable from the world; he is 'a-man-in-the world'. The universe is a uniform locus for each individual.

Ontology of Man : Being and Nothingness

There is flexibility in the life of man-remaining in the present to slip in future. Man's being in time and space or, as Heidegger terms it, man's "In-der-Welt-Sein" constitutes his situational being. Admittedly, this partly mental and partly physical phenomenon is not without an inboin tendency to "nihilate" itself and march beyond. As Camus puts it through the mouth of one of his characters : "Really, this world of ours, the scheme of things as they call it, is quite intolerable. That is why I want the moon, or happiness, or eternal life... Something, in fact, that they sound crazy, but

42. H. J. Blackham : Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 183.
43. Sartre : Intimacy—"The Wall", tr. by Lloyd Alexandar, Berkley Publishing Corporation, New York, 1960, p. 72.

which is n't of this world."[44] Merely a descriptive account of the existential projection as "being-in-the-world", "being-amidst-the-others" and "being - towards - transcendence - *in* - the-world", "being-amidst-the-others" and "being-towards-transcendence" is unable to satisfy the question : why does existence act as it does ? Where is this ontological man to be found ? "This world in-itself is not reasonable", writes Camus, "that is all that can be said. But what is absurd is the confrontation of the irrational and the wild longing for clarity whose call echoes in the human heart. The absurd depends on man as on the world. For the moment it is all that links them together. This is all I can descern clearly in this measureless universe, where my adventure takes place."[45] Had there been no trace of eternal consciousness in man, there would be no questioning, no answerability and no philosophy. The unpleasant human life, therefore, described particularly by Sartre, Camus, Malraux, Kafka, and Andre Gide, cannot be, in the sense in which F. H. Bradley takes the world, an appearance in opposition to the Real. For, man's worldly condition is a part of that self-conscious existing Being which he *potentially* is. In fact, what Heidegger has called "existentialities" do not pertain to the metaphysical nature of Being, but of its individualized states. By slaying God Nietzsche could succeed in abolishing only a historical efficacy of the ontological man, but not the ontological man himself. For, why did he say : "It is absolutely impossible to disguise *what* in point of fact is made clear by every complete will that has taken its direction from the ascetic ideal; this hate of the human, and ever more of the animal, and more still of the material, this horror of the senses, of reason itself, this fear of happiness and beauty, this desire to get right away from all illusion, change, growth, death, wishing and even desiring...all this means...let us have the courage to grasp it...a will for Nothingness, a will opposed to life, a repudiation

44. Camus, A. : Caligula and Cross Purpose, p. 13.

45. Camus, A. : The Myth, pp. 24. ff.

of the most fundamental condition of life, but it is and remains a will; and to say at the end that which I said at the beginning ...men wish Nothingness rather than not wish at all ?"[46]

Albert Camus sees between the world and man an absurd juxtaposition of a blind, relentless environment and being incorrigibly given to planning, hoping and seeing response from nature.[47] Such a strange interpretation of absurdity is an open revolt against loose and sentimental interpretations of a Christian belief that God has ordained material things to minister to man's needs.[48] Albert Camus has engraved the lives of this darker side of the coin of self-contingency is saying : "Actually I was sure of myself, sure of everything...sure of my present life and of the death that was coming...that, no doubt was all I had, but at least that certainty was somthing I could get my teeth into...I'd been waiting for this present moment...which was to justify me...From the dark horizon of my future a sort of slow persistent breeze had been blowing toward me, all my life long, from the years that were to come."[49] Or, as Sartre has put it : "Suddenly, out of the blue, freedom crashed down on me and swept me off my feet. Nature sprang back, my youth went with the wind, and I knew myself alone, utterly alone in the midst of this well-meaning little universe of years. I was like a man ...who's lost his shadow. And there was nothing left in heaven, no right or wrong, nor anyone to give me orders."[50] There is no question of metaphysical consolation, or any kind

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46. Blackham, N. J. : Six Existentialist Thinkers, London, 1951, p. 30.
47. See the Introductory essay on "The Absurd Line of Reasoning". in Camus Le Mythe de Sisyphe, Paris, Librarie Gallimard, 1942.
48. James Collins : Existentialists—A critical study, p. 202.
49. Camus, A. : The Stranger, tr. Stuart Gilbert (New York : Alfred A. Knoff, Inc. 1946), pp. 151-52, 153.
50. Sartre : "The Flies", in No Exit and The Flies, tr. Stuart Gilbert (New York : Alfred A. Knoff, Inc. 1947, p. 158.

of optimism behind the scenes of the world. All the existentialists believe in putting the burdens of the world on the shoulders of man himself.[51] Here, Sartre uses an absolute formula : "Without any help, and without any support, man condemned perpetually to fabricate man."[52] Life has no a priori meaning, it is up to each of us, by living, to give it some meaning. "Deeds ! Above all, and in pride of place, deeds ! That is to say, performance, and more performance ? You may rest assured that faith, which is a constituent of performance, will be secured by practice !"[53] There is no longer any intelligible values, nor any a priori good nor any inward light. "There is no longer any reality except reality in action."[54]

In Heidegger, there is an erudite discussion on 'Nothingness.' He unlike Aristotle, never attributes nothingness to the formless matter; nor, unlike Hegel, does he hold that Pure Nothingness is as good as a Pure Being. For him, Nothing is no more conceptual negation of Pure Being.[55] In his 'What is Metaphysics ?' Heidegger deals with the problem of Nothingness. Nothingness is what a Dasein in 'dread' personally experiences. 'Dread' is a mental state, and a person in 'dread' can therefore think of nothing definite. It is by relegating itself to the vanishing world that the "Nothing" emerges. "And this total relegation to the vanishing what-is-in-totality-such being the form in which Nothing crowds round us in dread—is the essence of Nothing : nihilism. Nihilism is neither an annihilation of what-is, nor does it spring from negation. Nihilation cannot be reckoned in terms of annihilation or

51. Emmanuel Monier : Existential Philosphies—An Introduction, (Rockliff, Salishbury Square, London, 1948), p. 91
52. Sartre : Existentialism And Humanism, p. 38.
53. Nietzsche : Aurore, Para, 22.
54. Sartre : Existentialism And Humanism, p. 38.
55. Sailesh Ranjan Bhattacharya : An Enquiry into The Fundamentals of Existentialism, p. 99.

negation at-all. Nothing nihilates of itself."[56] It is in face of dread's "Nothingness" that "what-is-in-totality" is revealed a priori as something that "is" and not as 'Nothing' a priori, because it is impossible for a man to comprehend the universe in its entirety. Thus Nothing negates itself, and not anything that "is". Nothing is nothing, only because it nihilates itself. "The essence of Nothing as original nihilation lies in this: that it alone brings Dasein face to face with that is as such."[57] According to Heidgger, "there is a 'pre-ontological' comprehension of Being involved in the conduct of the human reality as well as the Non-being involves in the negative propositions it makes and in the negative attitudes it adopts."[58] (e. g., hate, prohibition, regret, etc.). The Nothing is original and is the ground of transcendence and negation. The human reality or Dasein surpasses itself and the world "because it posits itself as not being in-itself and not being in the world,"[59] Thus Dasein in its pursuit of Being continues to negate itself and perpetually transcends itself as the world, till it is ultimately submerged into Nothingness "There is, then, Nothingness around Being, though Being expels Nothing from itself. Being, including the self and the world, is somewhat like an island in the sea of Nothingness."[60] This proposition resembles with that of the nihilist Buddhist, according to whom, there is a void out of which the process of things and beings unintelligibly emerges and in which the procession unconsciously terminates: annihilation is destiny of all."[61] Besides, Nothingness as Nothingness

56. Martin Heidegger : "What is Metaphysics ?" tr. by R. F. C. Hull & Allan Crick t Cf. Existence And Being, Vision Press Ltd., London, 1956, p. 369.
57. Ibid., p. 369.
58. Dr. A. C. Das : The Presidential Address : The Indian Philosophical Congress, Nov., 1970, p. 4.
59. Ibid., p: 4.
60. Ibid., p. 4.
61. Ibid., p. 5.

conceived after Heidegger, is something "extra-cosmic", and it is "absurd to think", that in the negative judgments like 'Mr. Smith is not in the room'. 'I have no fever', etc., judgments we usually make—"we rise to the ontological Nothingness and then return to the normal empirical life again."[62] Prof. Bhattacharya observes that is this 'extra cosmic' Nothingness be the foundation of transcendence, the human reality no longer remains a self-transcending being. And if man, as Heidegger maintains, be a 'being-in-the-world', and yet not a self-transcending existent, he can in no way transcend the world.[63]

"Existential thinking begins at a definite point, which others may regard as arbitrary but which is not at all arbitrary for the thinker himself, since it expresses his 'ultimate 'concern' as an existing individual; it is quite simply the idea for which he would be willing to live and die."[64] Kierkegaard's philosophy of 'subjective inwardness' finally suggests an ethico-religious solution. "Sadness" says Kierkegaard "means to be alone in having understood something true, as soon as one is in company with others, with those who understand, that sadness becomes an irony."[65] The more a person is afflicted the more he looks into himself. And in so doing he becomes more detached from others. He is exiled in his own world shattered by "the earth-quake"—the perils of life. And Kierkegaard's "purpose seems to be to isolate the individual in an absolute silence where he will be face to face with the thing necessary; the fusion of thought and existence. For it is only then that the spirit of man triumphs and he becomes the individual."[66]

62. Ibid., p. 5.
63. Sailesh Ranjan Bhattacharya : op. cit., p. 103.
64. Kierkegaard Anthology : edited by Robert Bretall, The Modern Library, New York, Intro. p. xxi.
65. Soren Kierkegaard : The Journals, tr. by Alexander Dru, 2nd ed., Fontana Books, 1960, p. 132.
66. op. cit., Intro., p. 21.

Unlike Hegel, Kierkegaard does never admit that thought can in any way be divorced from existence. Heidegger maintains that man's being in the world of phenomena, is an expression of the transcendental Nothingness. In other words, Heidegger's existentialism is defence of existence at the starting point, but always directed towards its essentialist ontologization because the divinely-oriented human spirit elaborated by Kierkegaard, whose views no doubt spring from his self-mortified and sinful personal existence, is completely absent in Heidegger. A recent critic has revealed this point..."he makes no secret of the fact that his own philosophy stands in a close relationship with past European speculation and that it is, or was, his ambition to be the Aristotle of our time, so far as the problem of Being is concerned."[67] According to Heidegger, man remains in direct relationship to the God of the Christiandom. Heidegger regards him as an 'openness' towards the eternity of Nothing. Jaspers goes deeper and assumes that man is, in his authenticity, God himself. Jaspers' logic borrowed a little less from Kierkegaard and a little more from Heidegger. He so utterly ignores the phenomenological aspect of man's existence that, at times, he is bound to be intolerally obscure.[68] This is one of the reasons why Jasper s' metaphysics can hardly be shown to be free from dogmatism. "...the Bible and the Biblical religion," he says, "are a foundation of our philosophy, a lasting orientation and a source of irreplaceable contents."[69]

Sartre holds that For-itself is still a subject of feeling rather than that of intellection. In fact, Being and Nothingness are so intertwined with our feeling self that any attempt to derive one from the other would be logical and not ontological. It is interesting to read what the Buddha in one of his dialogues

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67. Copleston, Fredrick : Contemporary Philosophy, London, p. 177.
68. Ramakant Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 190.
69. Jaspers K. : The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, London, p. 95.

says, "This world, O Kaccāna", says he, "generally proceeds on a duality, of the 'it is' and the 'it is not'. But Kaccana, whoever perceives in truth and wisdom how things originate in the world, in his eyes there is no 'it is not' in this world. Whosoever, Kaccāna, perceives in truth and wisdom how things pass away in this world, in his eyes there is no 'it is' in this world."[70] Consequently the appearance of consciousness must conceal within it a reality whose *elan* constitutes enduring experience of infinitude.

Freedom, Guilt and Sin

Prometheus became guilty when he stole fire from Zeus, the sovereign god Mt. Olympus, bringing to mankind self-consciousness, knowledge and technique. In this powerful Greek myth we have a dramatic experience of the reality of guilt as a determinant of human becoming. Greek tragedy arrived at the insight that guilt is an inevitable accompaniment in the self-actualisation of human freedom.[71] Shakespeare's tragedy likewise exemplified the co-relative phenomena of conscience and guilt as components in the human condition.[72] The modern novels have powerfully portrayed the experience of guilt, in its manifold forms. Franz Kafka's The Trial and Albert Camus' The Fall are cases in point. Kierkegaard, Jaspers, and Heidegger in particular have given careful attention to this basic phenomenon of human experience. Kierkegaard has described as "the most concrete expressions of existence."[73] Jaspers has analysed the concept in connection with his doctrine of the "boundary situation" which constitute the unsurmountable limits of man's existence. Heidegger has made the concept central to his ontology of human finitute. The call of conscience, says Heidegger, "reveals Dasein in his original possibilities as

70. M. Hiriyanna : Outlines of Indian Philosophy, London, 1932, p. 142.
71. Calvin O. Shrag : Existentialism And Freedom : Towards An Anthology of Human Freedom, p. 163.
72. Shakespeare : King Richard, Act-V.
73. Soren Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 470.

being guilty.[74] The reality of guilt is indissolubly linked with possibility and freedom as determinant of existence. "In so far as I know myself as being free", says Jaspers, "I acknowledge myself as being guilty."[75] When man turns toward his subjectivity, says Kierkegaard, he discovers freedom, and "there comes into being along with this *Ansich* of freedom another figure, guilt."[76]

One of Kierkegaard's most penetrating discussions on the nature of guilt and its relation to freedom is presented in his essay "On Ancient Tragical Motive as Reflected in the Modern", which appears in Either/Or. In this essay Kierkegaard discusses the difference between ancient and modern tragedy on the question of guilt. Kierkegaard argues that Greek tragedy over-accentuated the factor of necessity involved in the guilt and, consequently, tended towards a fatalistic world-view. Individual freedom and action were given priority. "Even if the individual moved freely, he still rested in the substantial categories of state, family, and destiny. This substated category is exactly the fatalistic element in Greek tragedy, and its exact peculiarity.'.[78] Modern tragedy, on the other hand, "strives to let the whole tragic destiny become transubstantiated in individuality and subjectivity."[79] The element of necessity or destiny, or what Heidegger calls 'Facticity' gives to guilt the qualification of inevitability and universality. Kierkegaard speaks of the self as being "essentially and unconditionally guilty."[80] Guilt is posited in the very process of existential becoming. It is a "power which spreads abroad everywhere"

74. Heidegger : S. Z. p. 288.
75. Jaspers : Philosophie, Vol. II, p. 263.
76. Kierkegaard : The Concept of Dread, p. 97.
77. Kierkegaard : Either/Or, Vol. I, pp. 113-33.
78. Ibid.
79. Ibid., p. 117.
80. Kierkegaard : The Gospel of Suffering, tr. David Swenson and Lillian Swerson (Minneapolis : Angsburg Publishing House, 1948), p. 92.

and "broods over existence".[81] Guilt is understood as an inevitable and universal determinant of human existence. "The fact that he discovers guilt so profoundly shows that to him this concept is present *sensu eminentiori*."[82] Jaspers develops the same view-point in his discussion of guilt as an unavoidable "boundary situation".

Guilt is an unavoidable phenomenon in existential reality. In the Post-Script, Kierkegaard elaborated what he considers three genuine conceptions of guilt. There is the conception of guilt by which the self considers itself as guilty only momentarily—probably on Sunday or New Year's morning. The universal and pervasive character of guilt is suppressed. The self considers itself guilty only at certain times. There is also the conception of guilt under the category of mediation. "Every mediation is a lower conception of guilt...Mediation dispenses man from absorbing himself in determinants of totality and makes him busy outwardly, his guilt being external."[83] The self in mediation avoids the consciousness of guilt by "existing abstractly". Guilt arises from man's freedom, which is always a freedom—within-a-situation. Jaspers contends that authentic existence must accept guilt as an implication of existential freedom and pursue its responsible projects while aware that guilt is unavoidable. "It is a matter not of becoming guiltless but rather of actually avoiding that guilt which can be avoided, so as to arrive at that guilt which is authentic, profound, and unavoidable,"[84] Heidegger argues with Jaspers that authenticity involves taking over guilt as unavoidable and irremediable. Man, according to Heidegger, does not have guilt; he is guilty. John Wild states Heidegger's concept of guilt most clearly when he writes : "This guilt is not conceived as something that may be added or substracted from man. It attaches to his finite

81. Kierkegaard : The Concept of Dread, p. 93.

82. Ibid., p. 96.

83. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 481.

84. Jaspers : Philosophie, Vol. II, p. 508.

being as such. He is inevitably guilty, not because he has violated some law, but his existence is necessarily pervaded with negation."[85] Guilt is part and parcel of the existential finitude of man.

Phenomenology of Boredom, Melancholy and Despair

The allied moods of boredom and melancholy, like those of fear and anxiety, play a significant role in existential philosophy. The writings of Sartre, Chekhow, Ibsen are pregnant with the poignant depiction of the mood of boredom as an escapable phenomenon of human life. Man is overcome with a nameless and growing emptiness and this continues to threat his authentic life-actualization. "How terrible tedium is--terribly tedius...The only thing I see is emptiness, the only thing I move about in it is emptiness."[86] Boredom and tedium lead to an emptiness in which all meaningful contents of life are threatened. Heidegger distinguishes the two forms of boredom with reference to the authentic and the unauthentic. "Authentic boredom is still far removed when we are bored with a specific book, a movie, an undertaking, or our idleness. It appears when one is bored."[87] Only authentic boredom discloses my true situation. Our involvement with books, movies, and various Sunday activities only provide us with a momentary escape from authentic boredom. Authentic boredom discloses "the basic phenomena of our being there."[88] Boredom is revealed as a determinant of existence itself. Sartre elucidates the point in his novel Nausea. Roquentim, the central character, expresses the basic phenomenon when he says : "I am bored, that's all. From time to time I yawn so wildly that tears roll down my cheek. It is a profound boredom, profound, the profound heart

85. John Wild : The Challenge of Existentialism, 1955, p. 123.
86. Kierkegaard : Either/Or, Vol. I, p. 29.
87. Heidegger : Was It ist Metaphysik ?, p. 30.
88. Ibid., p. 31.

of existence, the very matter I am made of,"[89] Heidegger speaks of an "appalling indifference" (merkwiirdige Gleichgiiltigkeit) which accompanies the onslaught of boredom. "The profound boredom, vacillating like a mute fog in the abyss of Dasein, draws all things, people, and one's self together into an appalling indifference".[90] This theme of emptiness and indifference is vividly expressed in D. H. Lawrence's novel 'Women in Love'. The central character, Rubert Birkin, in a revealing soliloquy, expresses a profound indifference to life and the world : "Why strive for a coherent, satisfied life ? Why not drift on a series of accidents-like a picaresque novel ? Why not ? Why bother about human relationship ? Why take them seriously—male female ? Why form a serious connection at all ? Why not casual, drifting alone, taking all for what it was worth ?"[91]

The phenomenology of boredom as formulated by Kierkegaard and Heidegger is visible in the writings of both Pascal and Schopenhaur. Pascal had impressibly described man's abortive search for external distractions and amusements through which he might divert himself and escape from his ennui.[92] Schopenhaur has presented illuminating things about man's experience of boredom : "The striving after existence is what occupies all living things and maintains them in motion. But when existence is assured, then they know not what to do with it; thus the second thing that sets them in motion is the effort to get free from the burden of existence, to make it cease to be felt, 'to kill time', i. e., to escape from ennui."[93] Solitude

89. Sartre : Nausea, trans. L. Loyd Alexander (Narfolk, Conn : New Directions, 1949), p. 210.
90. Heidegger : Was It Metaphysik ?, p. 30.
91. The Albatross : Modern Contented Library, 1949, p. 328.
92. Pensees, ed. Leon Brunschvicg (Paris : Libraire Hachette, 1904, entry 139.
93. Arthur Schopenhaur : The World as Will and Ideas, trans. R. B. Haldane and J. Kenp (London : Kegal Paul, n. d.), p. 404.

becomes unbearable; for in solitude man is thrown back upon himself and is forced to gaze into depth of his emptiness. The loss of everyday routine also accounts, says Schopenhaur, for the common "Sunday boredom." "In middle-class life ennui is repeated by the Sunday, and want of the six week-days "[94] The phenomenon of melancholy is a word closely allied to that of boredom.

Melancholy, like boredom, is characterized in the phenomenological description of Kierkegaard by an enigmatic and nameless emptiness. "If a melancholy man is asked what ground he has for it, what it is that weighs upon him, he will reply, "I know not, I cannot explain it."[95] Melancholy points to an indefinite discontinuity within human experience. Melancholy is not a mere psychological disturbance which can be relieved by a physician. It is a "spiritual ailment" or a "hysteria of the spirit", which means that it is a condition of existence itself and not simply the result of sociological conflicts. Kierkegaard, however, does not proceed to differentiate, between so-called "neurotic melancholy" and "existential melancholy". A clear-cut distinction between the existential and pathological character of mood has been submitted by Paul Tillich in his 'The Courage to Be.' Tillich defines existential anxiety in its various types. Pathological anxiety is the result of socio-psychological contingencies which produce unresolved conflicts in the personality of the individual and which can be removed through psycho-therapeutic treatment. Pathological anxiety, according to Tillich, is "a state of existential anxiety under special conditions."[96] In this state, the individual cannot accept the nothingness or non-being which is disclosed through anxiety, and by refusing to accept his non-being he remains unable to affirm the unique potentialities of his boredom. "He who does not succeed in avoiding the extreme

94. Ibid.

95. Kierkegaard : Either/Or, Vol. II, p. 159.

96. Paul Tillich : The Courage to Be, p. 65.

situation of despair by escaping into neurosis, he still affirms himself but on a limited scale. Neurosis is the way of avoiding non-being by avoiding being."[97] Tillich argues that existential anxiety cannot be annihilated. It is a universal determinant of the *condition humaine*.

Through the despair of self-affirmation man becomes defiant in his concept of metaphysical rebellion. "Metaphysical rebellion", writes Camus, "is the moment of which man protests against his condition and the whole of creation. It is metaphysical because it contends the ends of man and creation. The slave protests against the condition in which he finds himself as a man."[98] Desperate self-affirmation leads to a self-elevation of one's self as infinite, which in turn leads to a defiant rebellion against the condition of finitude. In the second of the Sickness unto Death despair is defined theologically as sin, properly understood as rebellion against God. In the story of the Fall, Adam affirms for himself a self-sufficiency which is equal to that of God. Man refuses to accept the fact that he is a creature, and he thus rebels against the source of his creation. In its rebellion the self clearly cannot hope for any help from God. This would destroy the radical self-affirmation in its protest against existence.[99] The boundary-limit of this despair of radical self-affirmation is suicide. The suicide of defiant despair is the final stage of a radical self-affirmation, in which freedom insisted upon as infinite, seeks into last desperate expression. Despiar is "overcome" only by going through it, not by avoiding it. As Sartre has Orestes proclaim in The Flies, "Human life begins on the other side of despair."

Value Orientation : The Ordinary Man's Value

Aristotle affirmed that the ordinary man welcomed the good life of physical pleasure and worldly honour. Spinoza reaffir-

97. Ibid., p. 66.
98. Camus, A. : The Rebel, trans. 1956, p. 23.
99. Kierkegaard : The Sickness unto Death, p. 119.

med the word 'fame' for the word 'honour'. The existentialists follow the footprints of a tradition almost as old as philosophy itself, with a fervent sensivity to certain human values. The people aspire to live in the bright light of consciousness, and prefer the life of Socrates unhappy to the life of a contented pig. Unamuno asks : "Which would you find more appalling, to feel such a pain as would deprive you of your faculties on being pierced through without feeling any pain ?"[100] Here, consciousness is a function of suffering and intensely lived experience. Unamuno explains, "The horrible terror of feeling yourself incapable of suffering and tears." In Camus' play Caligula the hero's mistress asks him : "Is this dreadful freedom still happiness ?" His answer is that of a typical existentialist hero : "Be sure, Caesonia, that without it I would be a contented man. Thanks to it, I have conquered the divine clear-sightedness of the solitary man."[101]

The anguish of being is in part a legacy of the traditional Christian Hebraic belief in creation ex nihilo and the Christian eschatological doctrine of the Last Judgement. It is beyond doubt that meditation upon the Christian mysteries was what produced this form of anguish in Unamuno. "For myself", he writes, "I can say that as a youth and even as a child, I remained unmoved when shown the most moving pictures of hell, for even then nothing appeared to me quite so horrible as Nothingness itself."[102] Pragmatism appeared as one of the offshoots of this longer movement, and William James called at various times "metaphysical wonder", "ontological wonder sickness", and "cosmic fear". Still another offshoot of this movement is positivism, of whose representative is Ludwig Wittgenstein. "Now, how the world is," he writes, "is the mystical, but *that* it is...We feel that even if, *all possible* scientific questions be answered, the problems of life have still

100. Unamuno : The Tragic Sense of Life, p. 207.
101. Camus, A. : Caligula (Paris : Gallinard, 1947), p. 209.
102. Ibid., p. 9.

not been touched at all..."[103] Wittgenstein went deeper than James. He regarded the anguish of man as a disease or aberration for which a cure should be found. "The solution of the problem of life is seen in the vanishing of the problem ..The riddle does not exist...For doubt can only exist where there is a question; a question only where there is an answer.'[104] Unfortunately, Wittgenstein's therapy has not been notably successful. Further, Christian existentialists place the dogma of the fall and the divine grace in the centre of their philosophy, as did Augustine and Pascal. The anguish of being reveals the radical contingency and ultimate meaninglessness of both man and the world. Man knows not why he exists and cannot rise to a knowledge of his destiny. In the words of Heidegger, it is as if man were "thrown into the world" and left there, or "forsaken", as Christ was forsaken on the cross. But, say the existentialists, what reason is there for defining man as a rational animal ? The eminently quotable Unamuno expressed his doubts on the subject in the following lines : "Man is said to be reasoning animal. I do not know why he has not been defined as an affective or feeling animal. Perhaps that which differentiated him from other animals is feeling rather than reason. More often have I seen a cat reason than laugh or weep. Perhaps it weeps or laughs inwardly—but then perhaps, also, inwardly, the crab resolves equations of the second degree."[105]

The Crisis of Human Existence : Decadentism and Commonplaceness

The existing overwhelming crisis not only baffles certain aspects of human life and civilization but the total existence of man. In this "progressive" age it is both pitiful and tragic

103. Ludwig Wittgestein : Tractatus Logico, (London : Routledge & Kegal Paul Ltd., 1922), p. 187.
104. Ibid., p. 187.
105. Unamuno : The Tragic Sense of Life, p. 3.

to see the ever-increasing discrepancy between the plenitude of scientific knowledge and the helplessness with which governments, peoples and individuals face the modern problems of human life.[106] The crisis was early diagnosed as a disease of human mind by some advanced thinkers. The German poet Goethe, usually given to optimism, grew doubtful and melancholy when he weighed the progressive trends of the early nineteenth century against the chances of human happiness. "Man", he wrote, "Will become more shrewd and clever, but will not be better or happy. I see a time approaching when God will no longer be pleased with man, when He will have to smash His creation to pieces in order to rejuvenate it." And Fredrich Nietzsche was to write half century later : "Oh thou proud European of the nineteenth century, art—thou not mad ? Thy knowledge does not complete Nature, it only kills thine own nature...Thou climbest toward heaven on the sunbeam of thy knowledge—but also down toward chaos. Thy manner of going is fatal to thee; the ground slips from under thy feet into the dark unknown; thy life has no stay but spider's webs torn asunder by every new stroke of thy knowledge."[107]

Kierkegaard diagnosed the sickness of the modern age more profoundly and accurately perhaps than any other modern author, with the possible exception of Fredrich Nietzsche. He regretfully stated that with the aid of Hegelian philosophy and liberal Protest Theology, it had become an easy and comfortable thing to call oneself a Christian and actually be a pagan. And he drew a sharp dividing line between "Christianity" and "Christiandom", asserting that whereas the former was and remained a resplendent reality, the latter was in danger of becoming but an "optical illusion." With his demand of an

106. Kurt F. Reinhart : Existential Revolt, p. 1.
107. Nietzsche : Thoughts out of Season, II, The Use and Abuse of History. (tr. by A. Collins, Edinburgh and London : T. N. Foulis, 1910), p. 76 f. In complete Works of Fredrick Nietzsche, ed. by Dr. Oscar Levy, Vol. V.

all-decisive "choice", an unconditioned "Either/Or", he furnished the weapons with which Ibsen fought in his philosophico-religious drama Brand and Peer Gynt against the half-heartedness and irresponsibility of liberal politics and social phrase-mongers. In the symbolic character of these two plays Ibsen presented his own version of the demand "All-or Nothing."[108]

Decadent atmosphere of the existential philosophy reveals itself in three fundamental motif which occur in various forms in Heidegger and Jaspers, but with greater emphasis in the latter, i. e., anti-naturalism, symbolism and hermeneuticism. "Decadentism is a synthesis of anti-naturalistic and anti-positivistic attitudes, multiform and irregular in its variations. The anti-naturalism of existential philosophy is not that of idealistic philosophy. It is a form of anti-naturalism compounded of hedonistic aesthetic motifs, in which nature is sentimentally degraded to the sphere of obscure, uniform and impersonal living."[109] More or less, every form of decadent culture culminates in esoterism. One of the inevitable manifestations of esoterism is Hermeneuticism, which is esoterism in its purely extrinsic and verbal aspect, more aesthetic than mystical in character. Obscurity itself is an instrument of existential clarification, because it lightens the profound and unfathomable obscurity of being. Basically, hermeneuticism means the significance attributed to that same word as one evocative force. It is another aspect of the fundamental lack of correspondence between reality and thought, the mutual independence of form and life, in which decisive moments a spiritual crisis is revealed, Finally, it is another form of the flight from reality, the fear of being, the detachment from life.[110] For more than a

108. Kurt F. Reinhart : The Existential Revolt, p. 1.
109. Norberto Bobbio : The Philosophy of Decadentism, A Study in Existentialism, trans. by David Moore (Oxford : Basil Blackwell, 1948), p. 18.
110. Ibid., p. 20.

baffled state of mind or a literary fashion, decadentism is an attitude of life. It therefore implies an definite conception of the world, and it has repurcussions on all the phases of spiritual life which presents an irrevocable withdrawal of man into himself. The man of decadentism is a new and a different man. He has neither the sanity of the one, nor the pride of the other. He does not feel the breath of the universe in his lungs, nor is he himself deeply absorbed in the universe. He is entirely isolated and withdrawn into himself. For example, man according to Heidegger is in a state consequent on a fall. He finds himself in this state from the beginning and for the most part, without having chosen it himself. This state resulting from man's fall—and here we are inevitably reminded of the Biblical story—is not the realm of sin, lust or pride; it is not even the arena of the cruel and inexorable struggle for existence; it is on the contrary, everyday in its commonplaceness.[111] It is that condition of man in which the subject of speech and action is not 'I' but an annoymous being—in which we live under the dictatorship of the personal 'one' who respresent normality : "We enjoy ourselves and amuse ourselves as *one* enjoys himself. We read, see and judge litrature and art as *one* sees and judges...The impersonal being, which is nothing determinates and with which each of us is identified, though not in its totality, prescribes the nature of every-day-ness."[112] In everydayness, conversation degenerates into garrulity, which signifies 'talking to excess' and a 'repetition' in which the topic is never mastered.

Commonplaceness is man's flight from himself, from his most genuine potentialities. The commonplace man is he who does not face the problem, but evades it, and in evading it assumes that he has solved it.[113] Heidegger speaks of unauthe-

111. Ibid., p. 32.

112. Heidegger : Sein and Zeit, p. 127.

113. Norberto Bobbio : Philosophy of Decadentism, op. cit., p. 33.

nticity in opposition to which stands the way of authenticity, being that way whereby man, in his anguish at the prospect of the nothingness that reveals to him the truth about his own nature, returns to himself after being lost in the impersonal and finds the most original, or authentic truth about himself in *anticipatory resolution*. This "is not a trick to overcome death, but an understanding which follows on the re-awakening of consciousness, and which opens up to death the possibility of making itself mistress of life and of destroying, root and branch, every fleeting disguise of self."[114] "Resolution' carries man into the existence of his own station. In Jaspers, too, the theme of existence develops on two distinct planes—the plane of actual being (Dasein) and the plane of potential existence (mogliche Existenz). In stead of the theme of commonplaceness, Jaspers develops the theme of animal security, objective tranquility; and social well-being, with its counterpart of existence as a threat, danger or risk. In actual being man is always in a situation. Above single situations, which may be evaded, there is a limit-situation beyond which none can go, and which is bound up with our actual being. In potential existence man enjoys freedom of particular situations, Freedom of existence is not the absolute freedom of Hegel, but a freedom that is continually threatened with complete destruction. The characteristic of existential freedom is that it is an imperilled freedom. Therefore the exaltation of freedom as a break with the world is a risk that is faced, because a *break* with the world is at the same time a resurgence from the world. By means of freedom man detaches himself from the crowd and becomes a single being. When Jaspers outlines the conditions of organized social life, he says that "in the philosophy of existence there is necessarily a bias towards those men who, with absolute gravity, have offered themselves the choice of their own existence and its reality, in other words, towards *heretics* or single beings, towards those who, remaining true to themselves and to their

114. Heidegger: Sein and Zeit, p. 310.

friends, have fulfilled their empirical being in the rapture of love and with their eyes fixed on their exaltation."[115] When he describes the nature of the philosopher, he writes that men who have truely lived a philosophical life are those who "freeing themselves from the chains which bound them to objective forms of authority or to earthly existence regarded as a blind reaching for happiness or as an enterprise designed for the laborious acquisition of the means necessary for life, and making themselves independent of their own roots in a mutual appeal, have lived the life of a community of free souls."[116] Whether a "heretic' or a 'free soul', face to face with the obscure and inert world, there stands the single being, who is only transparent to himself, in an attitude of disdain and defiance.

As regards the social problem the attitude of existentialism is first and foremost a polemic attitude. The predicament of singularity is challenged by the collective organization of society. Collectivism seems like a challenge to single existence, which stands aside, terrified by the continual threat of absorption in the solitude in which alone it finds its true realization. Under certain conditions, existentialism may have seemed like an escape from the oppression of social organisation, an invitation of social oppression,[117] Kierkegaard affirmed the predicament of 'singleness'. "The predicament of singleness", he says, "is so clearly associated with my name that I could wish to see inscribed on my tombstone the legend : "That single man".[118] In opposition to the philosophy of a particular and incomplete manifestation of the Universal spirit, had made of man 'an animal genus endowed with reason', Kierkegaard appeals to Christianity with the object of placing man in his individuality above humanity regarded as a universal essence. 'Others'

115. Jaspers : Philosophies, II, p. 392.
116. Ibid., p. 411.
117. Norberto Bobbio : The Philosophy of Decadentism, op. cit., p. 46.
118. Kierkegaard : Die Tagebiicher, I, p. 328.

are not the society of which we form part, but the undifferentiated and amorphous crowd from which we alienate ourselves in order that we may be ourselves and find the way to communication with God alone, The crowd says Kierkegaard, is the non-truth; the single man is the truth.[119]

Jaspers does not regard society and the state as the sphere of fallen man. Society is not a prison or a haven of refuge, but a bare necessity of the empirical life of man. The man as existence remains in 'tension' with the objective institutions. Thus the single man is always a heretic or a rebel who, to serve his individuality avoids and if he thinks fit, condemns society. The individual vindicates social institutions but is at the same time involved in a continual struggle for his own independence.[120] Jaspers' man is no longer alone in so far as he rises to the plane of existence and meets his neighbour. This relationship is called by Jaspers *existential communion*. In communication my neighbour is no longer an object but another 'myself'. Unlike Kierkegaard and Heidegger, Jaspers recognises the value of the presence of one's neighbour for the purpose of existential clarification. "There can be no man who is a man merely *pre-se-que* singularity and nothing else."[121] Existence is revealed and realized in communication; and communication is only possible if we meet in mutual affirmation of our respective freedom. "I do not achieve a sense of communication, merely through my own action; I must be met by my neighbour's action as well."[122] Thus in Heidegger men never meet; in Jaspers they meet, but outside the society in which the man of history finds realization. In Heidegger, society regarded as union is rejected; in Jaspers, it is transported to the plane of spiritual communication. In Heidegger, contact with one's neighbour is the *sine*

119. Norberto Bobbio : The Philosophy of Decadentism, op. cit., p. 46.
120. Ibid., p. 46.
121. Jaspers : Vernunft und Existenz, p. 50.
122. Jaspers : Philosophie, II, p. 57.

qua non of a deeper mutual penetration, but it does not become participation in the activities of the concrete world of history.[123]

Alienation

There exists a feeling of estrangement in modern man which has considerably increased during the last hundred years. In fact, alienation is a multi-dimensional phenomena, e. g., psychological, psycho-pathological and sociological.[124] Hegel was the first to treat this problem seriously. He coined the terms Entäusserung (externalization), Entfremdung (alienation), self-brstentfremdung (self-estrangement) and Vergegenstandlichung (objectification), and gave them a specifically philosophic connotation, Karl Marx was quick in grasping the central role of alienation. In his early writings, i. e., in Nationalokonomie und philosophie, he accepted Hegel's conception, but transformed it at once from "alienation of creativity" into an "alienation of productivity", corresponding to his replacement of idealism by materialism. The "alienation of productivity" is transformed into "alienation of classes" or into the class-struggle.[125] Alienation which has become the hallmark of the modern age is variously described as : "loss of self, anxiety states, anomie, depersonalization, rootlessness, apathy, social disorganization, loneliness, atomization, powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, pessimism and the loss of belief or values."[126] The all-pervasive nature of alienation has deeply affected probably every aspect of human activity. Malvin

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123. Norberto Bobbio : The Philosophy of Decadentism, op. cit., p. 50.
124. F. H. Heinemann : Existentialism and Modern Predicament, (Harper & Row, Publishers, New York And Evanston, 1958), p. 10.
125. Ibid., p. 12.
126. Eric and Mary Josephson, ed., Man Alone : Alienation in Modern Society (New York : Dell Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 12-13.

Seemans' treatment of alienation presents another example of looking at the problem from the individual's point of view. He enumerated five dimensions of alienation, e. g., powerlessness, normlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, and self-estrangement.[127]

Alienation is being rapidly recognised as a symptom of man's contemporary crisis, a human problem which poets refer to as reflecting a "desiccation of the world of sense", an "evacuation of the world of fancy," an "inoperacy of the world of spirit", a condition of having the experience but missing the meaning.[128] It points to a human malady which, as Erich Kahler observes, is found in the diverse forms of "disruption or invalidation of the individual", the "breakdown of human form, the dissolution of coherence and structure, not inhumanity...but a-humanity".[129] In the contemporary experience, as Bernard Murchland summarizes it, alienation refers : (i) "a disrelationship between the self and its world", (ii) the reduction of man to the status of a thing, (iii) the insoluble conflict of the self between the pleasure and the reality principle, the relation of thought to the techniques of calculation and manipulation and the loss of the feeling of being an active determining force in his own life, and (iv) the contradictory aspect of reality under the rubric of absurdity, the unbridgable gulf between reason and experience, the self and the not-self.[130].

Marx's treatment of alienation betrays not only social criticism, but also concerns the problem of the self in relation to

127. Malvin Seeman : "On the Meaning of Alienation", American Sociological Review, December 1959, pp. 783-791.
128. T. S. Eliot : The Complete Poems and Plays, 1909-1950 (New York : Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1952), pp. 120, 121, 133.
129. Erich Kahler : The Tower and The Abyss (New York : George Braziller, 1957), p. 146.
130. Bernard Murchland : The Age of Alienation, (New York : Random House, 1971), pp. 31-40.

nature and society, the conflict between thought and reality, and the gulf between reason and experience. In his essay- "Reflections of a youth concerning the choice of vocation", Marx is troubled by a conflict between the intellectual and the physical principle. On the one hand, Marx is convinced of a "Deity's calling", which is a sure guide for the improvement of mankind, and on the other hand, it is clouded by a "Self-deceit" that confuses agoism with the inner voice, or a "Self-contempt."[131] Secondly, "Marx's criticism of religion", which is his "premise for all criticism", surprisingly coincides with the Post-Nietzschean death of God which is the setting for all contemporary experience. Modern man, *Post-mortem-Dei*, faces the world without God and with "the experience of the absence of God". Similarly, Marx encounters the problem of alienation after Hegel had reduced religion to "representational feeling—a form of the spirit",[132] which is to be superseded by philosopy, and after Fluerbach had reduced theology to anthropology. Just as Nietzsche's proclamation of the "death of God" aims "to remain faithful to the earth",[133] Marx's criticism of religion "as the inverted consciousness of the world" is to unmask human self-alienation in its secular form not that it has been unmasked in its sacred form. Thus, the criticism of heaven is transformed into the criticism of the earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of law and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics."[134]

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131. Loyd D. Easton and Kurt N. Guddat, ed. and Tr., Writings of Young Marx on Phil. & Society (New York : Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967), p. 38.

132. J. N. Findly, Hegel : A Re-examination (New York : Collin Books, 1962), pp. 346-349.

133. Quoted from : Bernard Murchland, The Meaning of the Death of God (New York : Vintage Books, 1967), p. 216.

134. Robert C. Jucker, The Marx Engel's Reader (New York : W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1972), p. 12.

The social revolution which in early Marx appears to be the "protest of man against dehumanized life", rather than supporting a political revolution, seeks a radical revolution that would bring universal emancipation. For Marx, "A radical revolution can only be a revolution of radical needs". What is in theory a proclamation that, "man is the highest being for man", is realized in practice through revolution. Marx criticises the political state as "a constant system whose principle is the world-dehumanized."[135] He counters these pictures of human bondage on the strength of "a suffering mankind that thinks" and "a thinking mankind that is suppressed."[136] Early Marx's meaning of alienation appears to have proceeded from a logic that is different from an ethereally essentiality, dogmatically objectivizing, and parochially subjective frames of reference of Western consciousness. Marx has said : "It is not consciousness that determines life but life that determines consciousness."[137] The phenomenon of alienation can be viewed from three angles of vision—romantic, systemic and realistic. In the romantic view, the individual grasps the centre of attention. Things are looked at from *his* point of view. In systemic view, the *same* situation is looked at the collectivity's angle of vision. Realistic view of alienation is the approach which rules out the two extreme perspectives and follows a midcourse. Mostly sociologists have analysed alienation as a result of maladjustment to a collective situation and it is this preoccupation which is responsible for the distorted and erroneous of the phenomenon of alienation. [138] Marx, for example,

135. Marx to Ruge, May 1843; Werke 1, p. 339; Easton, p. 206.
136. Marx to Ruge, September 1843, Werke I, p. 343; Easton, pp. 210, 11.
137. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology, ed., R. Pascal (New York : International Publishers, 1947), p. 15.
138. B. D. Tripathi : Nature of Sociological Theories—The Action Approach, p. 192.

regards alienation as a separation of individual from his means of production and subsistence. It results from the contractual relationship between capital and labour. Alienated persons are powerless and strangled from their own reified creations.

Pain Threshold

The above phrase is an expression coined by William James in his Varieties of Religious Experience. This is how he defines it : "Recent psychology...speaks of the threshold of a man's consciousness in general to indicate the amount of noise, pressure, or other outer stimulus which it takes to arouse his attention of all. One with a high threshold will doze through an amount of racket by which one with a low threshold would be immediately waked...and so we might speak of a 'pain threshold', a 'fear threshold', a 'misery threshold', and find it quickly overpassed by the consciousness of some individuals, but lying too high in others to be often reached by their consciousness. The sanguine and healthy-minded habitually live on the sunny side of their misery line; the depressed and melancholy live beyond it, in darkness and apprehension."[139] The nineteenth century in its last three decades has been characterised by W. B. Yeats as "the tragic generation". Among the writers, a few names may be mentioned such as Lional Johnson, Dowson, Verlaime, Corbiere and their immediate forebears Bauldair, Mallarme, Laureamont and the Italian Jeopardi. James Thomson's 'City of Dreadful Night' deserves more space than we can afford to give it here, as being a sort of nineteenth-century forerunner of T. S. Eliot's 'Waste Land' : with its instances on the illusory nature of the world :

"For the life is but a dream whose shapes return
Some frequently, some seldom, some by night
......we learn

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139. James, William : The Varieties of Religious Experience (Longman, Green, 1903), pp. 132 ff.

While many change, and many vanish quite
In their recurrence with recurrent changes,
A certain seeming order; where this ranges,
We count things real; such is the memory's might."
(City of Dreadful Night)

Which invites comparison with :

"Unreal city
Under the brown fog of a winter dawn..." (The Waste Land)

But most of these poets of the late nineteenth century were only 'half in love with careful death'; the other half clung very firmly to life and complained about its futility. Conard's story 'Heart of Darkness' deals with a man who has brought himself to this point; he dies murmuring :

'The horror, the horror.'[140]

Nietzsche had an alternative system of belief. What is important is the fact that he began as a fervent Christian. In a letter, he tells his friend Von Gersdorff: "If Christianity means belief in a historical person or event, I have nothing to do with it. But if it means the need for salvation, then I can treasure it." Particularly there is a passage in the Joyful Wisdom that speaks of "pain...that compels us philosophers to decend into our ultimate depths and divest ourselves of all trust and all good nature wherein we have formerly installed our humanity. I doubt whether such pain improves us, but I know it deepens us."[141] 'Notes From Underground.' is the first major treatment of the outsider theme in modern literature. With Hesse's Steppen Wolf it can be considered as one of the most important expositions of the outsider's problems. It stands as a uniquely great monument of existentialist thought. It's hero is not a man, but a beetle. This is just what

140. Conard : Heart of Darkness, quoted in Collin Wilson : Outsider, p. 119.
141. NietzscheJoyful Wisdom (trans. T. Connor, T. N. Foulins, 1910) p. 7.

he makes himself out to be; his first words are : 'I am sick. I am full of spleen and repellent...' He considers himself as beetle, for twenty years, living alone in his room, and thinking, thinking...He is neurotically over-sensitive : "No hunchback, no dwarf, could be more from to presentment and offence than I..." Dostoevsky's work leaves the same taste, his 'Eternal Husband' and many of the short stories arouse a mixed feeling of boredom and disgust. If we were to judge Dostoevsky by such works, the final verdict on him would be the same as Shaw's on Shakespeare that he understands human weakness without understanding human strength.[142] In 'Crime and Punishment' the suffering fevered Raskolinko's reactions to his perception of universal misery is to comit a crime, to kill an old pawnbroker, whose death will serve the double purpose of providing him with money to escape his binding poverty, and of being a gesture of defiance, a definite act. The murderer achieves neither of these purposes; he finds no money and solves no problems. "The reader asks, why does he solve no problem ? and it is only too easy to 'identify' his horror of the bloodshed with a moral intention on the part of the author. Berdyaev writes : "The spiritual nature of man forbids the killing of the least and most harmful of men : it means the loss of one's essential humanity...it is a crime, no higher end can justify. Our neighbour is more precious than any abstract notion...That is the Christian conception and it is Dostoevsky's."[143] The Brothers Karamazov is Dostoevsky's biggest attack on Outsider's theme. Extreme of crime or extremes of asceticism, murder or renunciation, both have the same effect. Both free the Outsider from his fundamental indecision so that the problem is carried to a higher stage. Dostoevsky has considered the question from the angle of freedom. His beetle-man stated his credo, 'that man's whole business is, to prove that

142. Collin Wilson : Outsider, p. 132.

143. Berdyaevr : Dostoevsky, Living Age Books Published by Meridian Books, New York, p. 97.

he is man, not a cog-wheel'. Freedom means life.[144]

The Country of the Blind : The World Without Value

In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king. But his kingship is kingship over nothing. It's world is a world without values. Roquentin is in the position of the hero of The Country of the Blind. He lives in a hotel in Le Havre. His life would be a quiet record of research, conversations in the library, sexual intercourse with the Cafe's patronne : "I live alone, entirely alone, I never speak to any-one, never; I receive nothing, I give nothing...." But a series of revelations disturb him. He stands on the back and picks up a flat stone to skin on the sea, and suddenly...'I saw something which disgusted me, I no longer know whether it was the stone or the sea'. He drops the stone and walks off.[145] Roquentin is overwhelmed by a spiritual counterpart of violent physical retching. "...the nausea is not inside me; I feel it *out* there, in the wall; in the suspenders; everywhere around me. It makes itself one with cafe', I am the one who is within it."[146] Roquentin insists on the objective nature of the revelation: Somebody puts on a record, it is the voice of a Negro Woman singing 'some of these days'. The nausea disappears as he listens : "When the voice was heard in the silence I felt my body harder and the nausea vanished; suddently it was almost unbearable to become *so* hard, so brilliant...I am *in* the music Gloves of fire turn in the mirrors, enriched by rings of smoke."[147]

Albert Camus' Outsider is an empiricist, he has no genius, no unusual feelings to bestow; in fact, he has hardly any feelings at all. "Mother died to-day or may be yesterday. I can't

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144. Collin Wilson : Outsider, p. 200.
145. Sartre : The Diary of Antoine Roquentin (tr. Llyod Alexander; John Lehman, 1949, p. 8.
146. Ibid., p. 31.
147. Ibid., p. 34.

be sure."[148] The note of indifference persists throughout the novel L'Stranger. There is a glaring similarity between Camus' work and Kafka's. In Kafka, the sense of unreality is conveyed by deliberately using a dream-technique. In the Metamorphosis, the hero awakes one morning to find himself changed into a gigantic beetle; in The Trial, he is arrested and finally executed without knowing why. Destiny seems to have struck with the question : If you think life is unreal, how about this ? Its imperative seems to be : claim your freedom, or else......For the men who fail to claim their freedom there is the sudden catastrophe; the nausea, the trial and the execution, the slipping to a lower form of life. Kafka's Metamorphosis would be a perpetually commonsense parable to a Tibetan Buddhism. Camus 'L' Stranger reminds us of Earnest Hemingway who has dealt with the problem of freedom. The parable that it brings to mind is the short story 'Soldier's Home', but comparison of the two makes it apparent that all of 'Hemingway's work has its relevance to the problem of the existentialist outsider.

Hemingway's first novel, The Sun Also Rises had a stiffling atmosphere of the trivial and unheroic. The hero, Jack Barnes, has been through the war, and a serious wound in the genitals has made him incapable of consummating sexual union with a woman. The wound is symbolic of the whole tragedy of unrealized freedom. The woman he loves has to take other man for physical satisfaction. Paris of the nineteenth century is a futile round of drinking and dancing; the futile people of the 'Waste Land' : 'I see crowds of people walking around in a ring'. Hemingway does not turn to the past, to the Biblical prophets or Dante's Comedia, for meaning. He is much less an intellectual than Eliot. But certainly he would agree with Sartre that 'Freedom is terror'; or possibly : Freedom is crisis. Jack Barnes goes on a fishing trip to Spain, and sees the running of the bulls, and inspite of his unhappy affair, he is not too discontented with life. As with Meursault the pleasures of eating and

148. Camus, A. : The Outsider, (trans. 1946), p. 9.

drinking and sunlight make up for a great deal. Hemingway's answer to the indictment of Eliot's 'Waste Land', is : Seek out the heroic. Jack Barnes says in the Sun Also Rises : "Nobody ever lived their life all the way up except bullfighters". The theme of the novelists rotates round the current problems of disturbed life, viz., "human predicament, with all its hopes and aspirations, successes and failures, strength and weakness. The helplessness of an orphan, the exploitation of the poor by the industrialists, the law's delay and sometimes its cruelty, the social discrepancies and the heartlessness of people engaged the creative power of novelists. It is the erring mankind, struggling for a better tomorrow which forms their vision of life."[149]

Challenge of Existentialism

The term 'existentialism' represents a philosophy of man who is involved in life and its problems. Existentialism postulates no scheme, no method and no formula. It approaches human life as one continuous flow of consciousness, struggling; suffering, despairing and tending towards death.[150] I. M. Bochanski, writing on the general characteristics of existentialist philosophy remarks : "Existentialism addresses itself to what are to-day called the 'existential' problems of man—the meaning of life, of death, of suffering, to name but these..." and "the commonest characteristics among the various existentialist philosophies of the present is the fact that they all arise from a so-called existential experience..."[151] This current of thought is best understood as a rebellion against the abstract objectivism or essentialism of modern thought with an intensive emphasis on the concrete subjective existence.[152] Kierkegaard attacked the four major phases of this essentialism as

149. Collin Wilson : Outsider, p. 33.
150. Ramakant Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 4.
151. T. M. Bochenski, : Contemporary European Philosophy, California, /958, p. 159.
152. Jonn Wild : The Challenge of Existentialism, p. 28.

they are expressed in the idealism of Hegel. He criticised the non-descriptive, speculative method of modern philosophy, its essentialist metaphysics, its neglect of practical awareness, and its repudiation of personal ethics.

Gabriel Marcel tells us how he found many of the problems of modern philosophy to be "of merely academic interest."[153] Reality, as we live it cannot be squeezed within the framework of an a *priori* system. "It seemed to me," writes Marcel, "that was a danger of making an illicit use of the idea of integration, and that the more one relied on the richest and most concrete data of experience, the less this idea appeared to be applicable to reality."[154] Heidegger and Sartre have broken more radically with the pre-suppositions of past empiricism. They have more clearly the peculiar intentional structure of human awareness. Thus, according to Heidegger, we should not think of the mind as a thing that is simply there.[155] For Sartre, all awareness is a pure relation of identity. He even goes so far as to say that it is a relation as such.[156] The pour soi is the thing-in-itself (en soi) which it knows. One cannot be reduced to the other. The thinkers of high merit have also rejected the Kantian notion of the appearance or phenomenon as another entity separated from the thing as it is, as an effect is separated from its cause. The thing does not produce its appearance in something else which also helps to cause it. It is the thing itself which appears. The mind does not *make* its objects. The existentialist philosophers have successfully turned their attention to the data and they observe that these datas, as given, are not restricted to a small number of clear and disinct atomic *qualia*. They are rich in variety, manifold in order, and jumbled together in vast confusions. As Gabriel Marcel remarks : "What is given to me beyond all possible doubt is the confused and global experience

153. Gabriel Marcel : The Philosophy of Existence. p. 87.
154. Ibid., p. 94.
155. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p. 159.
156. Sartre : L' etre et le Neant, p, 429.

of the world inasmuch as it is existent."[157] No man has ever sensed a red path. He grasps this by sense and reason together, each apprehending the object in its own proper way. What is given to both in the first place is a blurred confusion.[158]

There is universal argument that being is an all-pervasive factor to which we have direct access. According to Heidegger, "Being, as the basic theme of philosophy is no kind of being and nevertheless it pervades each entity...Philosophy is universal phenomenological ontology, beginning with the interpretation of human existence."[159] The subjective existence of man is sharply distinguished from man as an ordinary object of consciousness. To exist is not the same as to be perceived, as Berkley thought. Heidegger complains that the whole tradition of Western philosophy has basically misunderstood man by thinking of him in this way as a mere thing which determine properties. and ignoring his peculiar way of existing.[160] In his important book, Sein und Zeit, he has forged a new set of existential categories or existentials, by which he believes that we may hope to gain a more adequate insight into the peculiar, temporal being of man. Others like Jaspers and Marcel go much farther, and deny that any mode of theoretical reflection can do justice to existence. They are certainly correct in distinguishing between being and being known, and thus rejecting idealism. Sartre follows Heidegger very closely, and states explicity that "existence precedes essence".[161] If man were an artifact, like a paper-knife, his idea (essence) would have preceded his existence and determined its nature. But man is not artifact. He was not created for any purpose. Hence has no fixed nature, but determines this by his own choice.[162] Inspite of this denial,.

157. Gabriel Marcel : Metaphysical Journal, p. 322.
158. Gabriel Marcel : Man Against Mass Society, p. 119.
159. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p. 38 (tr. Wild).
160. John Wild : Op. cit., p. 65.
161. Sartre : Existentialism, p. 18.
162. Ibid., pp. 15-20.

Sartre, like Heidegger, is forced to recognise certain stable "conditions", as he calls them, like death and the need for food, which pertain to all men everywhere.[163] Marcel has spent his energy fighting against "abstractions" in attempting to come closer to the concrete. His position is less anti-rational than that of Jaspers. "It is clear", he says, "that reflection on the meanings of words must be directed, just as Plato wanted it to be, towards a grasp of what traditional philosophers used to call essences. One can protest too strongly against a kind of existentialism, or a kind of caricature of existentialism, which claims to deprive the notion of essence of its old value and to allow it only a subordinate position."[164]

The existentialist way of thinking makes a new dimension in its approach towards the impersonal nature of the modern industrial or technological age, against scientism and positivism. Positivism and scientism look into only the external nature of man. Totalitarian movements whether fascist, or communist, have ventured to crush or submerge the individual in the collective or the mass. Existential outlook is distinctly different from modern spirit and the technological age.[165] Existentialism is a successful plan concerned with the eternal problems of human life. "Existentialism as a universal element in all thinking is the attempt of man to describe his existence and its conflicts, the origin of these conflicts, and the anticipation of overcoming them......Wherever man's predicament is described either theologically or philosophically, either practically or artistically, there we have existentialist elements."[166]

163. Idid., pp. 45-46, Cf. p. 87.
164. Marcel : Man Against Mass Society, p. 85.
165. Harold H. Titus : Living issues in Philosophy, Eurasia Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., Ram Nagar, New Delhi, 4th Edition, p. 297.
166. Paul Tillich : "Existentialist Aspect of Modern Art", in Christianity and the Existentialists, Carl Michalson (Ed.), New York : Scrilners, 1956, pp. 129-130.

While stressing the value of life, existentialists also realistically face the facts of human weakness, insecurity and limitations. Anxiety, the existentialists assert arises as man comes to have a sense of meaninglessness of his life. Anguish and melancholy lead to existential despair, and this "crisis" prepares man for the "leap" into authentic existence. The descriptions of the various modifications of anxiety and "three stages of existence" advocated by Kierkegaard indicates an indulging awareness and use of the phenomenological method. The existential thinker tries to discover the universal possibilities of his lived concreteness. "The majority of man", writes Kierkegaard in his Journals, "are subjective towards themselves and objective towards all others, terribly objective sometimes but the real task is, in fact, to be objective towards one's self and subjective towards all others."[167] Heidegger endeavoured to reconcile phenomenology and existentialism. The deeper level of reality is found in man himself as he seeks orientation in his world of concrete, lived experience. Heidegger argues that only by strict adherence to the phenomenological formula, we are able to preclude, "all abstract constructions and formulations, accidental findings, acceptance of merely apparently demonstrated concepts, and adoption of pseudo-questions which often present themselves as real problems."[168] The task of phenomenologist is to analyse, describe and interpret the original data. The datum or phenomenon of existence is always prior to any epistemological theories concerning it.[169]

As we have already pointed out that existentialism is a reaction against the philosophical solutions proposed by Hegel, Marx and Engels and modern scientists, the existentialists have felt deeply and impartially that these proposed solutions

167. Kierkegaard : Journals, entry 676.

168. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, pp. 27-28.

169. Calvin O'Schrag : Existence and Freedom Towards an Ontology, p. 11.

are ineffective in meeting the problems of modern man. A considerable treasure of descriptive knowledge of science often leave man's life empty. Man's feeling of estrangement is increasing by leaps and bounds. The industrial solution, technological achievements, the collective trends and mass movements, all have tended toward the depersonalisation of man. "Because the very existence of man on this earth is menanced, because the annihilation of man, his dehumanization and the destruction of his humanity and of all moral values is a real danger, therefore the meaning of human existence becomes our problem."[170]

170. F. H. Hinemann : Existentialism and Modern Predicament (London : Adam and Charles Black, 1953), p. 178.

CHAPTER FOUR

Soren Kierkegaard

Individual : Three Spheres of Existence

Kierkegaard raised a slogan to oppose the one-sidedness of philosophical and speculative pursuits. His sincerity lies in the direction of determining the scope of philosophy and its varied functions concerning life and its encircling glooms and upheavals. He explains : "What I really need is clearness as to what I ought to do, not so much as to what I ought to know...What I need is the power to live a complete human life, not merely a life of knowledge." Because of his realistic approach towards life, he is called an existential pragmatist. In his opinion, the awareness of individual existence is the subjective knowledge and this special type of awareness is different from introspection of psychology. Subjective knowledge is deeper and intensive than introspection. Kierkegaard's interest in morality is deeper than metaphysics. In accordance with his values advocated, regarding human life, the Truth is not higher than the Good and the Beautiful. The elements of these three aspects of enlightened life are deeply rooted in each living soul. "The true is not higher than the good and the beautiful, but the true and the beautiful belong essentially to every human existence, and unified for an existing individual not in thought but in existence."[1]

As grossly individualistic in his approach towards life, he dimly felt a need to go through history for the sake of presenting a social analysis. Besides this, the philosophical and religious backgrouud of his studies lifted him from being a merely literary thinker. "He lacked the historical interest and

1. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 311.

understanding for an adequate analysis of the social situation."[2] Kierkegaard would add that if one did first get a life of one's own, one would not greatly interest oneself in world history. For, he did not believe in history as an objective process revealing God. "The existing individual who chooses to pursue the objective way enters upon the entire approximation—process by which it is proposed to bring God to light objectively. But this is in all eternity impossible becomes God is a subject, and therefore exists only for subjectivity in inwardness."[3] Inspite of his free and deta ched thinking, he is of opinion that the marches of events leave none to be unrevenged. Society peeps through historical events and the individual moves on like a passing shadow. His individualism is not the vulgar refusal to be one among many, a drumming on the differential traits. On the contrary, he lays the whole emphasis upon the generally human : "Every human being must be assumed in essential possession of what essentially belongs to bring a man. The task of the subjective thinker is to transfer himself into an instrument what clearly and definitely expresses in existence whatever is essentially human."[4] The comparison of Hegel's conception of self with Kierkegaard's approach to the *Problem of subjectivity* is stated clearly and forcefully by Kierkegaard himself : "The systematic idea (Hegel's) is the identity of subject and object, the unity of thought and being. Existence, on the other hand, is their separation. It does not, by any means, follow that existence is thoughtless; but it has brought about, and brings about, a separation between subject and object, thought and being."[5]

Kierkegaard rejects the definition of man as essentially mind. He vehemently rejects Hegel's emphasis on what is uni-

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2. H. J. Blackham : Six Existential Thinkers, p. 21.
3. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 178.
4. Ibid., p. 318.
5. Ibid., p. 112.

versal in man, there by giving preference to the existing individual : ..."for my task was as a humble servant...to provoke, if possible, to invite, to stir up the many to press through this defile of "the individual", through which, however, no one can pass except by becoming the individual..."[6] The existential thinker lives in the realm of imagination, feeling and passion.[7] He protested "Let others complain that the age is wicked, my complaint is that it is wretched, for it lacks passion." This kind of passage leads Jean Wahl to say that Kierkegaard's writings "appear like a revenge of romanticism upon system." But what is the outcome of this inwardness and what is the discovery which comes as counter to Hegelian objectivity ? In his Concept of Dread, Kierkegaard says : "...by turning inwardly man discovers freedom, and for his bliss, not freedom to do this or that, to become king or Emperor, or the exponent of 'public opinion', but freedom to know of himself that he is 'freedom.,"[8]

To be Christian, according to Kierkegaard, is to *suffer* before God.[9] The theologians know little of suffering, but a great deal about suffering : "The Two Ways are—one is to suffer; the other is to become a professor of the fact that another suffered."[10] Kierkegaard speaks of 'individual existence' in a very special sense, a sense in which a man is not simply a biological, psychological, or social animal, but in which a man is a 'human being' an 'existent' which is something far more exciting than the 'more' existence of a particular orga-

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6. Kierkegaard : The Point of View etc. trans., Lowrie (London : Oxford University Press, 1939), pp. 130-31.
7. Margarett Chatterji : Existentialist Outlook, p. 14.
8. Kierkegaard : Concept of Dread, trans. W. Lowrie, p. 96
9. Robert C. Soloman : From Rationalism to Existentialism, Harper and Row, Publishers, New York, Evanston, San Francisco, London, p. 70.
10. Auden, W. H. : The Living Thoughts of Kierkegaard, Bloomington, Ind : Indian University Press, 1952, p. 26.

nism. The meaning of human existence, according to Kierkegaard, lies in its constant and conscious inner striving (strebend), parallel to the fundamental notion of *conatus* in Spinoza and the *Will* in Schopenhaur.[11]

The famous Kierkegaardian doctrine of the three spheres of existence—the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious is a theory about stages in the growth of personality rather than a metaphysical scaffolding. He draws atten tion more to the dark and turbulent moments than the tranquil ones. But it is not a morbid preference made in order to institute a literature of gloom and frustration. Each individual is related to God as the 'Alone to the Alone'. "In the person of Christ, God Himself enters into the zone of the existential. The immutable becomes a changing being, the eternal puts on temporal process, the suprahistorical inters into history. This is the paradoxical nature of faith."[12] In general, each of the three stages is a certain manner of human existence characterised by a certain attitude toward life and its purpose. The first stage is the aesthetic stage of pleasure which culminates in perdition. The second stage is the ethical stage; its focal point is action which brings forth victory. The third stage is the religious stage. Its focal point is simply suffering.[13]

For Kierkegaard, the central issue in life is what it means to be a Christian, or to become a whole man. He wants *to come* to an understanding of the central factors of existence, his own immortal souls, his destiny, and the reality of God, the absolute sovereign. There are, Kierkegaard believes, two great enemies of Christianity. One is the Hegelian philosophy. Cartesian and Hegelian abstract speculation depersonalizes men and leads to the impoverishment of life. The second enemy

11. Robert C. Soloman : From Rationalism to Existentialism, p. 87.
12. James Collins : Existentialist—a Critical Study, p. 15.
13. Fredrick Patka : Existentialist Thinkers and Thought, (Philosophical Library, New York, 1962), p. 78.

of Christianity is the conventional churchgoer, who imagines that he lives in a Christian community and by performing "good works" becomes 'a Christian in true sense'. Kierkegaard is highly critical of much in the Christianity or "Churchianity" of his day, especially the "unorthodox" Christians, with their revolutionary optimism, belief in human progress, confidence in reason, and faith in the goodness of man. According to Kierkegaard, there is an "unbridgable gulf" between God and the World, the Creator and the creature, Supernature and nature.[14] To be suspended in doubt is to experience existential anguish. "Every man who has not tasted the bitterness of despair has missed the significance of life, however beautiful and joyous his life might be."[15] When man is in anguish, he must abandon reason and embrace faith. In the agonised "leap of faith", man embraces the absurd and the paradoxical. "Christianity takes a prodigious gaint-stride...a stride into the absurd-there Christianity begins...how extraordinarily striped it is to defend Christianity..."[16] To Kierkegaard, faith is everything.[17] There must be either whole-hearted obedience to God or open rebellion. Man is either for or against Christ, for or against truth, Christianity is absolutely true or absolutely false. A celebrated critic observes : "Kierkegaard rejects belief in the eternal verities, as well as Plato's trust in reason as a kind of social sight. Ethics is for him not a matter of seeing the good but of making a decision, The crucial difference between an informed and uninformed, a reasoned and unreasoned, a responsible and irresponsible decision, escapes Kierkegaard.

14. Ibid., p. 85.
15. Soren Kierkegaard : Either/Or, trans. David F. Swenson and Lillian Marvin Swenson (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1946) II, p. 175.
16. Kierkegaard : The Sickness Unto Death, trans. Walter Lowrie, (New York : Doubleday, 1954), pp. 217, 218. Anchor Book.
17. Kierkegaard : Fear and Trembling, trans. Walter Lowrie (New York : Doubleday, 1954) pp. 41, 42 (Anchor Book).

Yet he is unquestionably right that reason cannot absolve us from the need for decision, and he sees that Greeks and Christians and modern philosophy have tried to ignore this all important fact."[18]

Ethical Doctrine : Inwardness and Faith

'Here within me is my existence, compelled to the most fundamental choices about its life, standing before God', that is the reality for Christian existentialism or personalism.[19] It is no wonder that Theodor Halcker speaks of Kierkegaard as seeking to reverse the order and procedure for philosophy and thought. "He wishes to go from the person over the things to the person and not from the things over the person to the things."[20] When the people lose the love of God it does not follow that they find, and can control themselves. For what has replaced God in the modern world is not strictly reason or light, but that fate or destiny. "Modern man, like the characters of Greek tragedy, no matter how they turn or twist, they cannot escape. Modern man, is paralysed, chilled with fear in face of blind contingency, in face of the monstrous forces he is incapable of controlling by social or political measures. And if, from the terrifying prospect of a blind world in which building and destroying successively tip the scale... he then turns his gaze inwards upon the recesses of his own mind, he will discover a chaos and a darkness there which he would gladly ignore."[21] Kierkegaard's belief may be most clearly demonstrated by his own words : "For in relation to the absolute there is only one tense : the present. For him who is not contemporary with the absolute—for him it has no exis-

18. Kaufmann : Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, p. 17.
19. Leslie Paul : The Meaning of Human Existence, p. 166.
20. Theodor Haeckar : Soren Kierkegaard (trans. Alexander Drue; New York : Oxford University Press, 1937), p. 27.
21. Charles Gustor Jung : Modern Man in Search of a Soul, p. 236.

tence. And Christ is the absolute, it is essay to see that with respect to Him there is only one situation; that of contemporaneousness. The five, the seven, the fifteen, the eighteen hundred years are neither here nor there; they do not change Him, neither do they in any wise reveal who He was, for who He is revealed only to Faith."[22]

Looked at from one point of view, Kierkegaard's account of the standpoint, faith is a vigorous protest against the way in which speculative philosophy, represented principally by Hegelianism, blurs the distinction between God and man and rationalizes the Christian dogma, turning them into philosophical demonstrated conclusions.[23] In the Hegelian system "the qualitative distinction betwean God and man is pantheistically abolished."[24] The system does indeed hold out the attractive protest of "an illusory land, which to a mortal eye might appear to yield a certainty higher than that of faith."[25] But the mirage is destructive of faith, and its claim to represent Christianity is bogus. "The entirely unsocratic tract of modern philosophy is that it wants to make itself and us believe that it is Christianity."[26] Man's highest form of self-realisation as spirit is for Kierkegaard his self-relating to the personal absolute. "Existence is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, and the existing individual is both and infinite and finite."[27] But to say that the existing individual is infinite is not to identify him with God. It is to say that his becoming is a constant striving towards God. "Existence itself, the act of existing, is a striving ..(and) the striving is infinite."[28] Further he explains,

22. Kierkegaard : Training in Christianity, Trans. Walter Lowrie, p. 67.
23. Fredrick Copleston : A History of Philosophy, Vol. 7, Modern Period, Part II, p. 115.
24. Kierkegaard : The Sickness Unto Death, p. 192.
25. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 213.
26. Kierkegaard : The Sickness Unto Death, p. 151.
27. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 350.
28. Ibid., p. 84.

"Existence is the child that is born of the infinite and the finite the eternal and the temporal, and is therefore a constant striving."[29]

Perhaps, the most controversial point in Kierkegaard's theology is his concept of "existential faith." Regis Jelivet, the French Thomist, says of it that it "rests upon a great truth, corrupted by a grave error." Since faith is a divine *gift*, Kierkegaard is right when he emphatically insists that it can only be received but not acquired, regardless of any amount of scientific, philosophic, or theological effort. And as the object of supernatural faith is absolutely beyond the capacity of human reason, it may properly be called a "paradox" ("a stembling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks"). This is especially true of Christ, the God-made man. As a believing Christian, therefore, Kierkegaard had to protest against Hegelian rationalism which proclaimed the primacy of reason over faith. Kierkegaard's fundamental error, on the other hand, consists, according to Jelivet, in his identifying the following two procedures : "the rational demonstration of the truth of something which transcends reason, and the rational demonstration of the reasons for belief in something which transcends reason." Kierkegaard's confusion, says Jelivet, "is well-summarised in the texts when he objects to every attempt to 'prove Christianity' and unremittingly condemns apologetics'. But apologetics do not assume the senseless task of proving mysteries : it applies itself solely to assembling and establishing the proofs of credibility. The motives of credibility "do not produce faith but they influence the soul and justify it in admitting the gift of faith."[30]

Kierkegaard's message to the present age is summarised by Johannes Hohlenberg : "What is at stake in the choice between the individual and the collective, between the human person

29. Ibid., p. 85.

30. Regis Jelivet : Introduction to Kierkegaard (trans. W. H. Barber; London : Fredrick Muller, 1950), p. 55 f.

and the crowd, between freedom and slavery, between Christ and Anti-Christ. Either, the life of the individual person, a microcosm as the image of God, capable of free, responsible action, and therefore...a life of toil and much suffering and many dangers; or, the life of an impersonal, unfree member of a collective, without the possibility of independent knowledge and responsible action, a life in the service of unknown forces-and compensation for the loss of freedom at best of false, illusory dream of material welfare in an earthly paradise which can never become a reality."[31] The meaning of "existential truth" in Kierkegaard is a translation of the abstract into the concrete, an ethical and religious appropriation of the ideal, a ' how" rather than a "What". Theodor Haecker calls the separation of the intellect from all the other human faculties in man a special characteristic of European philosophy. "European philosophy", he says, "proceeds from the world through the person, who is but an empty relative point, back to the world; it goes from objects, things, sensations..., passing as quickly as possible over the subject, the self, the individual, back to objects, things, and sensations...Kierkegaard does not follow this age-old development because he aims at something higher. He wishes to reverse the person by way of the thing to the person, and not from the things by way of the person to things."[32] Existence, according to Kierkegaard, is a movement or a continuous process of constant becoming. If anything is to be predicated of such a process, it is clear that the process itself must be thought of as static, for the subject of a predication must abide by the law of identity. No system of logic can study change without converting it into a concept. "Nothing must be incorporated in a logical system that has any relation to existence, that is not

31. Johannes Hohlenberg : Soren Kierkegaard, (trans. Maria Bachmann Islor; Basel : Beno Schwabe & Co., 1949), p. 417.

32. Theodor Haecker : Soren Kierkegaard, p. 25 f.

different to existence."[33]

Kierkegaard has made a 'Copernican revolution' by emphasising subjective thinking in the direction of investing truth. Before his arrival, the ethical thinkers were of opinion that the standard of moral judgment is determined by the society and the environment. To a man thrown in the depth of forest or desert, like Robinson Crusoe, morality has no meaning. But, contrary to this, Kierkegaard gives no importance and absolute dependence to society and environment. Morality begins from inside and grows higher and higher in the outer world. It may and may not await society for its growth. Hence society is not certainty but probability. Kierkegaard admits that man requires divine help because he is not self-sufficient. Helplessness and seclusion give birth to confidence and it is "existential leap in faith." To a great extent, the existentialism of Kierkegaard goes parallel to Vedāntic conception of the realisation of truth where intuition is the stepping-stone to realise reality and bliss. God is not other than our pristine purity of soul. Existential leap in faith is visible in the opening chapters of Bhagavad-Gītā. The encircling gloom and bewilderness of Arjun is an ever-burning example of the empirical soul caught in the net of worldly entanglements, which symbolises the existential trends in its wider sense pertaining to all ages.

Subjective thinking gives birth to worries, repentance, grief and disappointment. But the situation is shifting in nature. It is a light before daydawn. Just the shadow reminds us of the light so the awareness of grief inspires the afflicted to seek remedy. It is the migration of the Prince Siddhārtha to the enlightenment of Lord Buddha, though both are the same in person yet different in thoughts. The higher we think of the grief and privation, the better we go nearer to the divine. Kierkegaard observes : "In the religious sphere, the positive is recognisable by the negative."[34] Kierkegaard has compared

33. Kierkegaard : Postscript. p. 100.
34. Ibid., p. 474.

God with Love. Nārada Bhakti-Sūtra also maintains that God is the embodiment of Love. It is useless to ask question whether love is not. Love is only for those who are aflame of love. Similarly, God is only for those who realise Him intuitively. "One proves God's existence by worship...not by proofs."[35]

Becoming a Christian—A Religious Way of Life

A religious stage is that sphere of life defined by the conception of the individual in relationship to God. Kierkegaard rejects not only the reinterpretation of the Christian conceptions of God, Christ, and the incarnation by Hegel, but the entire rationalist approach to Christianity. God is not immanent—such a concept is 'hypocritical atheism'—but transcendence, in Kant's terms noumenon, and essentially unknowable and incomprehensible. God is not only separated from man, but forever unknowable by man. God cannot be an object of knowledge, but simply an object of faith, and here Kierkegaard is in complete agreement with Kant. Christianity, for Kierkegaard, is not a set of doctrines, but a way of life, a set of values.[36]

Kierkegaard views that the levelling destroys the singularity and qualitative difference of the self, and therefore the order of value and of status.[37] Consequently, a sort of external alienation arises and the individual disappears in the mass. "To battle against the princes and popes is easy compared with struggling against the masses, the tyranny of equality, against the grim of shallowness, nonsense, baseness and bestiality".[38] He speaks in the name of the "exception", the extraordinaries, i. e., people singled out for an exceptional burden and for an extraordinary mission. "The disappearance of the self in the

35. Ibid., p. 485.
36. Robert C. Soloman: From Rationalism to Existentialism, p. 98.
37. F. H. Heinemann: Existentialism and Modern Predicament, p. 35.
38. The Journals (ed. by A. Drue), 1317

mass is external alienation. Kierkegaard would agree with Hegel that alienation is a self-estrangement of the mind, not, however, of the abstract or universal, but of the individual mind or of the self. Kierkegaard therefore becomes the psychologist or rather the psychopathologist of self-estrangement."[39] Kierkegaard defines the existential individual elaborately. At first, he who is in an infinite relationship with himself and his destiny. Secondly, he feels always himself to be in Becoming, with a task before him; and, applying this idea to Christianity, Kierkegaard says: one is not a Christian—one becomes a Christian. Thirdly, the existent individual is a kind of incarnation of the infinite in the finite. This passion which animates the existent is regarded by Kierkegaard as, 'the passion of freedom".[40] Leslie Paul, a celebrated critic observes that in Kierkegaard's deepest level of thinking man is not concerned with assessment of proof but with the most building of beliefs, in which the consequence is not an academic assent to theoretical propositions but the movement of the whole being in the acts of life. "Existense", Brock has written, "is not real in being known, it is real in being effectuated, in the rememberance of it, and in the revolutions for the future which are taken to be absolutely binding."[41] This is reminiscent of the dictum of the phenomenologist of the school of Husserl that life is not a problem to be solved but a reality to be experienced.

Hugh Ross Machintosh speaks of "existential thinking" as "a mode of thought which concerns not the intellect merely but the whole personality of the man who awakens to it and adopts it. To think existentially, therefore, is to think not as a spectator of the ultimate issues of life and death, but as one who is committed to a decision upon them...Kierkegaard would have said that the chief defect in Hegel's philosophy is the

39. F. H. Heinemann : Existentialism and Modern Predicament, pp. 36, 37.
40. Jean Wahl : A Short History of Existentialism, p. 6.
41. Leslie Paul : The Meaning of Human Existence, p. 163.

definite lack of such thought."[42] Kierkegaard speaks of faith in these lines : "The paradox of faith is this, that the individual is higher than the universal, that the individual determines his relation to the universal by his relation to the absolute, not his relation to the absolute by his relation to the universal."[43] It is in the doctrine of contemporaneousness with Christ that the exaggerations of Kierkegaard's arguments become most clear. This argument is central to his position.[44] His belief may be most clearly demonstrated by his own words : "For in relation to the absolute there is only one tense : the present. For him who is not contemporary with the absolute—for him it has no existence. And as Christ is the absolute, it is easy to see that with respect of Him there is only one situation : that of contemporaneousness. The five, the seven, the fifteen, the eighteen hundred years are neither here nor there; they do not change Him, neither do they in any wise reveal who He was, for who He is, is revealed only to faith."[45]

Was Kierkegaard in fact a Christian ? Some of his most perspective and favourable critics have offered their doubts : "In the hands of Kierkegaard's pseudonyms", Louis Machey has written, "the mystery and the miracle of Christianity has degenerated to contradiction and nonsense. Christianity has been not difficult to believe, but completely incredible."[46] Mark Taylor concludes his careful scholarly investigation of Kierkegaard's thought by noting that because the "self's faith, as Jesus' divinity, is inward and cannot be outwardly expressed", Kierkegaard's Christianity removes its believers from the world—historical process, forcing them to "remain isolated

42. Hugh Ross Machintosh : Types of Modern Theology, foot-note to page 219.
43. Kierkegaard : Either/Or (Lowrie, Kierkegaard, p. 264.
44. Leslie Paul : The Meaning of Human Existence, p. 186.
45. Kierkegaard : Training in Christianity, p. 67.
46. Louis Machey : Kierkegard : A Kind of Poet, Philadelphia : 1971, p. 242.

individuals, closed in their own subjectivity."[47] In part, Kierkegaard can be defended against this later charge.[48] It is true, of course, that he disclaimed any world-historical significance for Christianity, although this is only because "objective world-history" is not history at all, but the triumph of abstract thought over actual existence. Taylor, however, may still be quite correct, even if for the wrong reason, in his implication that Kierkegaard has distorted Christianity. Christianity is itself 'existence—communication' he said, and what it communicates is not a word —historical phenomenon like Christendom, but inwardness. Because he defines Christianity as communication itself, and not the content of that communication. Mackney decides that Kierkegaard is most fittingly described as a poet. He offers a "verbal object" that reaches for a response from the reader. "Kierkegaard's work is poetry because it traffics in possibilities."[49]

The Existential Pathos : Despair and Anxiety

What is noteworthy, according to the father of existentialism, is that the feeling of pathos is not due to his involuntary divorce from divine reality. Therefore, however lost or derelict human existence in the world may be, there is always a hope that it will at last unite with its original source and deliver itself from all finiteness. Man's life, for Kierkegaard, is not 'Une passion absurde' of Sartre or 'a frightful maze' of Kafka, but is full of glory. Hopelessness, absurdity and limitations would fade away when the being of existent comes across the purity of God.[50] The concept of Kierkegaardian stages suggest the prescription of motive to existence, which is, in reality, neither absolutely finite nor absolutely infinite. An individual common as his life as an aesthete and mounting up to the

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47. Mark Taylor : Kierkegaard's Pseudonymous Authorship : A Study of Time and the Self (Princeton : 1975), p. 367.
48. James P. Carse : Death and Existence, p. 457.
49. Louis Mackey : A Kind of Poet, p. 289.
50. Ramakant Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 28.

ethical level, culminates in transforming a religious personality.[51] Nevertheless, a note of wasteful pathos running throughout the aesthetic phase of life portrays a poignancy which we hardly fail to notice in the pages of his journals. "I have searched in vain", he writes, "the expanse of Sea to its bottom...as the depth of knowledge, a place where I could throw the anchor. I have felt the most irresistible force in me with which one pleasure extends its hand to another; I have also felt a kind of false exaltation and experienced boredom and anguish as its consequences."[52] The path towards transcendence is so complex that while feeling a moral disposition man's inwardness is already pierced by religious fervour. Thus the father of the theistic existentialism does not seem to maintain that there ought to be a stereotyped order among the stages of existential living, in case an individual wishes to make religiosity the ultimate goal of the aesthetic and the ethical. "Neither does he represent," Says Walter Lowrie in his Introduction to the Stages on Life's Ways, "that one stage must be definitely left behind before a man enters upon the next. He affirms, in fact, of the aesthetic that it is never superseded but only 'dethroned'.[53]

Despair brings about the shipwreck of aestheticism. All men are despairing animals.[54] For, "Despair over the earthly or over something earthly is really also about the eternal and over oneself, in so far as it is despair, for this formula is for all despair."[55] The hustle and bustle of daily work, the illusion and misery of life, the mystery of death and 'the dread of guilt" produce in us a consciousness of crisis. "When I despair," speaks Kierkegaard, "I see myself to despair, and therefore I can indeed by myself despair of everything; but when I do this, I cannot by myself come back. In this moment of decision

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51. Ibid., p. 29.
52. Journals, pp. 58 ff.
53. Kierkegaard : Stages on Life's Way, p. 9.
54. Kierkegaard : Sickness Unto Death, p. 97.
55. Ibid., p. 60 ff.

it is that the individual needs divine assistance..."[56]

There has been perhaps on other philosopher in modern times who took so seriously the problem of despair or anxiety as Kierkegaard did. It is this quality which manifests the spiritual element in man; and the more pathetic a man's expression, the more natural is its manifestation. Kierkegaard had observed in himself a profound awakening of some sort of 'spiritual bashfulness', and his experience of anxiety in its correlate. "It must be remembered", writes Walter Lowrie, "that for S. K. suffering is the religious category–not accidently (as when suffering occurs in the aesthetic sphere and mars pleasure, or in the ethical sphere and obstructs striving) but essentially, and that not only in the beginning but throughout."[57] Thus, by positing suffering at the very centre of man's life in all its three stages, Kierkegaard implies that apart from its psychological expressions despair never ceases to be an ontological experience. "The despair of Finitude is due to the lack of Infinitude", writes Kierkegaard, "all the lack of infinitude means to be desparately narrow-minded and mean-spirited."[58] The act of man's profound longing for the infinite is responsible for his struggle against the finite.

Practical Awareness and the Feeling of Dread

Theoretical knowledge in its purity and precision tells us *what* somthing is, but by itself it is never sure about existence. This is because it is detached and remote from its objects.[59] For this reason, Kierkegaard attacked it bitterly as useless and inadequate. "All the profound thinkers", he says in his Journals,[60] "are agreed in placing evil in isolated subjectivity—

56. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 230, See also Sinari Ramakant, 'Existentialism : The Philosophy of the Rebel', in Radical Humanist, Vol. XXV, p. 17.
57. Kierkegaard : Stages on Life's Way, p. 11.
58. Kierkegaard : Sickness Unto Death, p. 49.
59. John Wild : Challenge of Existentialism, p. 33.
60. The Journals of Soren Kierkegaard, No. 1042, p. 366.

objectivity being the saving factor. Oh depth of confusion! No—the whole concept of objectivity which has been made into our salvation is merely the food of sickness..." This emphatic recognition of the individual person as the bearer of all authentic human values together with a distrust of mass mechanisms and mass attitudes has been transmitted by Kierkegaard to the whole existentialist movement. Certain commentators have interpreted Kierkegaard's attack on speculative objectivity as his emphasis on the ethical and religious as a defense of "spiritual" quietism. This is certainly a mistake.[61] The concept of existence which underlies the thought of Kierkegaard and his followers is not that of mystical communion with transcendent being nor with a pantheistic all-engulfing being. For Kierkegaard, to exist is to struggle and act in the world of man. It is not merely to think, but to seek for communication; not only to remain detached, but to become engaged.

In the writings of existentialists, the concept of dread is conspicuous, but with Kierkegaard, it has a religious setting. And in The Concept of Dread, it has a close association with the idea of Sin.[62] Dread is defined by Kierkegaard as a "sympathetic antipathy and an antipathetic sympathy."[63] Take the case of a small boy who feels an attraction for adventure, "a thirst for the prodigious, the mysterious."[64] The child is attracted by the unknown, yet all the same is repelled by it, as a menace to his security. Attraction and repulsion, sympathy and antipathy, are interwoven. The child is in a state of dread, but not of fear. For, fear is concerned with something quite definite, real or imagined, a snake under the bed, a wasp

61. Journals, No. 1226; Works of Love, pp. 12-13.
62. Fredrick Copleston : A History of Philosophy, Vol. 7, Modern Period, Part II, p. 116.
63. Kierkegaard : The Concept of Dread, p. 38 (trans. W. Lowrie, Princeton and London, 1944).
64. Ibid.

threatening the string, whereas dread is concerned with the unknown and indefinite. And it is precisely the unknown, the mysterious, which both attracts and repels the child.

Kierkegaard applies this idea to sin. In the state of innocense, he says, spirit is in a dreaming state, in a state of immediacy. It does not yet know sin. Yet it can have a vague attraction, not for sin as something definite, but for the use of freedom and so for the possibility of sin. "Dread is the possibility of freedom."[65] Kierkegaard uses Adam as an illustration. When Adam, in the state of innocense, was told not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he could not know what was meant either by evil or by death. For the knowledge could be obtained only by disobeying the prohibition. But the prohibition awoke in Adam "the possibility of freedom...the alarming possibility of *being able*."[66] And he was attracted and repelled by it at the same time. True, the leap of faith, according to Kierkegaard, means salvation, not destruction. "The dread of possibility holds him as its prey, until it can deliver him saved into the hands of faith. In no other place does he find response..."[67] This means to imply that dread is overcome by the leap.

Kierkegaard discovered that aesthetic despair can be cured only by marching forward into what is temporarily a deeper level of despair. A man must abandon the spectator's attitude. He must become honest enough to acknowledge his guilt. He must stop pretending that life is a trivial game. Then, and only then, can he begin to discover that true freedom involves spiritual dependence. He takes the story of Genesis as symbolic of what happens in the experience of every man. Each person finds himself to be a mixture of bondage and responsibility. Freedom means that we have a hand in making ourselves what we are to become, but it also means that we can negate as well as affirm,

65. Ibid., p. 139.
66. Ibid., p. 40.
67. Ibid., p. 140.

we can destroy as well as construct. Freedom means that a man can have kinship with Nothingness as well as with God. "This condition of indeterminate potentiality (which Berdyaev calls 'meonic' freedom because it derives from non-being) is a condition of anxiety. Thus man's position is not only above the brutes; it is intrinsically more precarious, and we may sometimes run away from it so as to return to the irresponsible bliss of an animal condition. But we cannot really escape, and because of his freedom each man becomes aware of evil desire, sin, and guilt as springing from himself. Thus from beginning to the end of history, human nature is an ambiguous mixture of two factors : (i) the goodness of creation which comes from God, and (ii) the distortion caused by sin which comes from man. Finitude, temporality, self-hood, and sexuality are not intrinsically evil; they are aspects of the goodness of creation. But he never encounters them in their unspoiled conditon."[68] The self, he declares, is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, the eternal and the temporal, freedom and necessity. Because man is not self-sufficient, and because he can achieve true self-hood only by being related aright to God...This takes two basic forms : (1) despair at not willing to be oneself, and (2) despair at willing to be oneself. A third form, despair at not being conscious of having a self, falls below the reflective level and, for our purposes, can be ignored."[69]

After this primary statement of the problem, Kierkegaard carries forward his analysis in accordance with the following scheme : (1) despair viewed in terms of the factors in the synthesis of self-hood, (a) finitude/infinite, (b) possibility/necessity. (2) Despair viewed under the aspect of consciousness, (a) unconscious/(b) conscious. Under the last category, conscious despair, appear in two fundamental forms of 'not willing to be

68. David E. Roberts : Existentialism and Religious Belief, (A Galaxy Book, New York, Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 74.
69. Ibid., pp. 106-7.

oneself', and 'willing to be oneself' which we shall call, for the sake of brevity, 'weakness' and 'defiance'.[70] The deeper truth is that Ethics and Religion, for him, are not at all concerned with the objective, but are related to the subjective, and inner, immediate consciousness of one's own existence. 'Self-contemplation';[71] is the only contemplation that is needed for Ethics; and "God is not an externality"[72] either. The ethical or religious good is not to be discovered in the outer world, but "on means of the self-penetration of the individual in himself and his God-relationship."[73] God has created the world but being a subject. He cannot be seen outside, but must be inwardly realized. "My task is a Socratic task", Kierkegaard was fond of saying. Socrates used to say "Know thyself". This subjective, inward experience is the only absolutely certain truth. "Only in subjectivity is their decisiveness, to seek objectivity is to be in error."[74] "An objective uncertainty held fast in an appropriation-process of the most passionate inwardness is the truth, the highest truth attainable for an existing *individual*."[75] We shall go back to Socrates. "In the principle that subjectivity, inwardness, is the truth, there comprehended the Socratic wisdom, whose everlasting merit it was to have become aware of the essential significance of existence, of the fact that the knower is an existing individual."[76] It should be noted that subjective conception makes truth "an equivalent expression for faith."[77]

In the long process of ethical and religious development, Kierkegaard thus distinguishes three broad stages of the gradu-

70. Ibid., p. 118.
71. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 284.
72. Ibid., p. 145.
73. Ibid., p. 129.
74. Ibid., p. 181.
75. Ibid., p. 182.
76. Ibid., p. 183.
77. Ibid., p. 182.

ally deepening existential transformation. The Absolute direction (Respect) towards the absolute telos—'initial expression' of the existential pathos. Then there is what he calls the 'essential expression'—namely "eternal recollection of guilt."[78] The dialectic of existence turns inwards from the objective, aesthetic sphere of enjoyment, to the subjective, ethical sphere of ideal, by the shocking effect of the perishability and uncertainty of all objects. It takes yet another leap from the ethical to the religious, for subjective self-assertion to self-surrender, by the shock of despair. What sustains this continuing struggle is : "the delicious quickening of that lonely well-spring which exists in every man, that well-spring in which the Deity dwells in the profound stillness when everything is silent." To "forget what it is to be a man", is to "forget what it means that He is the Deity."[79] We may further add that, "The self in so far as it has achieved authentic self-hood in an absolute choice, he has given itself away absolutely. Extremes meet in Kierkegaard's own peculiar case : his absolute subjectivity becomes absolute objectivity in his total self-displacement before God, which is the effect of his persistance in a reiterated absolute choice of infinite."[80]

Concept of God

In his eternal quest of essential truth man concerns himself with the highest Being of all, namely, God; and it is in Him that human destiny reaches its perfect crystallization.[81] Kierkegaard says that there are two modes of being i. e., God and the existing individual. While God's being is infinite, eternal and absolutely free, the being of the existing individuals is finite, temporal and subjective to changing situations. "The absolute difference between God and man," Kierkegaard wrote,

78. D. M. Datta : Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy, p. 520.
79. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 163.
80. H. J. Blackham : Six Existential Thinkers, p. 22.
81. Ramakant Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 20.

"consists precisely in this that man is a particular existing being (which is just as much true of the most gifted human being as it is of the most stupid) whose essential task cannot be to think *sub specie acterni*, since as long as he exists he is, though eternal, essentially an existing individual, whose essential task is to concentrate upon inwardness in existing; while God is infinite and eternal."[82] God's being is an abstract-notion. It is not only non-existent in time but also non-realizable in its fullness by the living individuals. After charactering Him, therefore, as Pure Being, Kierkegaard contends that in modern philosophy the culminating point of an abstraction is the place where Eternity and Instant merge into one pure experience. "Eternity and Instant are the extreme terms of the contradiction, whereas otherwise conceived the dialectical witchcraft makes eternity and the instant signify the same thing."[83] What the writer earnestly stresses is that in the world of temporality, the highest pitch attainable by the inwardness of the human is Christian faith; because it is there that God himself endured the being of the infinite.[84]

Freedom can never be conceived without a reference to man's inner relationship to God's individuality. Man's appropriation of the inwardness of his existence constitutes 'existential freedom.' Kierkegaard shows that when existential freedom is understood as the opposite of necessity it is wrongly construed under the intellectual category, "...The opposite of freedom is guilt," says Kierkegaard, "and it is the supreme glory of freedom that it has only with itself to do..."[85] Kierkegaard's understanding of human existence is not only morally oriented as religious, but also, on the other hand, widely influenced by the intuitionism of the Christian world.[86] The

82. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 195.
83. Kierkegaard : The Concept of Dread, p. 75.
84. Ramakant Sinari : op. cit., p. 21.
85. Kierkegaard : The Concept of Dread, p. 96 ff.
86. Ramakant Sinari : op. cit., p. 25.

foundation of historicity on faith entails an ontological experience of the divine personality. "The object of faith," says Kierkegaard, "is not a teacher with a doctrine...The object of faith is the reality of the teacher, that the teacher really exists...The object of faith is hence the reality of the God-man in the sense of his existence."[87]

Kierkegaard and Nietzsche : (A Comparison)

Both the thinkers have used reflection for self-reflection. "For them, the way to truth is through understanding oneself. But they both experienced how one's substance can disappear this way, how the free, creative self-understanding can be replaced by a slavish rotation about one's own empirical existence."[88] Kierkegaard knew the horror "of everything disappearing before a sick brooding over the tale of one's own miserable self." He knew the "unhappy relativity in everything, the unending question about what I am." Nietzsche expressed it :

Among a hundred mirrors
Before yourself false...
Strangled in your own net
Self-knower !
Crammed between two nothings,
a question mark...[89]

"Later generation sought the basic, in general, in articulateness, in the aesthetic charm of the immediately striking, in a general simplification, in the unreflective experience, in the existence of the things closest to us. To them, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche seem useful; for both lived consciously with a passionate love for the sources of human communicability."[90]

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87. Kierkegaard : Postscript, p. 230.
88. Leslie Paul : The Meaning of Human Existence, p. 171.
89. Quoted in The Meaning of Human Existence, p. 170.
90. Walter Kaufmann : Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre; p. 170.

Both dreamed of a better future for entire human race. Dissatisfaction and restlessness of the existing generation troubled them seriously. Kierkegaard thought : "The religious understanding of myself has deserted me; I feel like an insect with which children are playing, so pitilessly does existence handle me."

Nietzsche was ceaselessly conscious of moving on the sea of the infinite, of having given up land once and for all. In his opinion, neither Dante nor Spinoza knew his loneliness; somehow, they had God for company. But Nietzsche, empty in his loneliness, envisaged Zarathustra and meditated upon the eternal return. He lived continually like someone mortally wounded. "If I only had the courage to think all that I know..." But, in this limitless reflecting, a deeply satisfying content was revealed which was in fact transcendent.[91] Both the thinkers leaped towards Transcendence. Kierkegaard leaped to a Christianity whereas Nietzsche leaped to the eternal return and Superman. The ideas which were for Nietzsche himself the very deepest, can look empty to us; Kierkegaard's faith can look like a sinister alienation. If one takes the symbols of Nietzsche's religion literally, there is no longer any transcendental content in their will toward immanence : aside from the eternal cycle of things, there is the will of power, the affirmation of Being, the pleasure which "wills deep, deep eternity."[92]

A Critical Estimate

Whenever we try to assess his contribution to the modern age, as a 'founder of modern existentialism', we are compelled to say that, "The anti-intellectualism and irrationalism which are implied in Kierkegaard's transition to choice and decision can hardly be counted as positive assets. The opening up of a way from the individual to the transcendent is valuable; but here the interrelations with other persons and with the world,

91. Ibid., p. 172.
92. Ibid., p. 172.

so vital for the life of the persons are neglected."[93] He set up a glorious analysis of psychological and psychopathological possibilities. "He overstressed, however, the morbid aspect of human life, being himself a psychopathological case, regarded by some as schizophrenia, by others as of the maniac-depressive type."[95]

Kierkegaard's other glaring shortcoming is his 'in-adequacy of the man himself to bring to fruition the redirection of philosophy that he initiates'. The glamour of his dialectic lies in the final religious stage that alone gives meaning to the whole, which he calls "an intensive point". The aesthetic trivial and the ethical are merely transitory. Subjectivity is revealed only in the domain of religious stage. "Subjectivity can be truely subjective only in the confrontation of the individual with God, since only the absolute is completely indescribable, completely beyond the inroads of abstraction and objectivity. Only before God is a man really himself, because it is only before God that he is finally and irretrievably alone."[96]

In understanding the nature of man, Kierkegaard has overlooked the significance of objective findings of various faculties which are invariably connected with human beings. "Against Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*, one might well suggest that if we are going to understand man we need the objective findings of psychology, sociology and history just as much as the need to encourage each individual to introspect about the nature of his own life."[97] Further, more than this, it appears gravest weakness, on his part, when he ruled out the communal or social quest for truth, in the moral and religious

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93. F. H. Heinemann : Existentialism and Modern Predicament, p. 45.
94. Ibid., p. 46.
95. Ibid.
96. Marjorie Grene : An Intro. to Existentialism, p. 37.
97. John Wild : World of Freedom, p. 142.

spheres. "To Kierkegaard, an individual is only really himself when he is before God; but he is before God only when he is most alone, and even then he is conscious of his human emptiness and nothingness and of his infinite distance from God. It is true that only in turning from others to total isolation that one finds out who he really is. Must one forsake all causes and all friends to find himself ?"[98]

Kierkegaard's view of the religious life is even more gloomy and hopeless as forever pervaded by suffering. His undue "emphasis upon the demands that Christianity places upon one's life was a needed corrective of the view of the institutional church of his day with its stress upon belonging and fellowship. But his appeal to Job and Abraham of the Old Testament sounds too much like a rationalization for his own unhappy life. It is true that he claimed he was not himself a Christian, but he also said that he alone knew what Christianity really was."[99]

Kierkegaard's own exposition of Christianity is paradoxical. While in his early writings, he stresses the passion with which one holds a belief, and that is intensively subjective, in The Book on Adler and in his revolt against "Christiandom", he felt the necessity of obedience to the truths revealed by the Apostles. It appears that while Kierkegaard wanted the individual accept religious inwardly, he also wished this religion to be orthodox Christianity. In case, the Orthodox Christianity is not true to a particular individual, Kierkegaard would reply, as he laid emphasis in The Book on Adler, "it is not doubt of religious truth but in subordination against religious authority which is the fault in our misfortune and the cause of it."[100]—

98. Ibid., p. 143.
99. Ibid., p. 143.
100. Kierkegaard : On Authority and Revelation : The Book on Adler, or a Cycle of Ethics—Religious Essays, Intro by Fredrick Sontag, trans., Intro. and notes by Walter Lowrie (New York : Harper Torchbooks, 1966), liv.

In this guise Kierkegaard appears another champion of authoritarian religion, not of the right of each man to find his own truth. Walter Kaufmann emphatically declared "one can hardly be satisfied with him or pleased; but his greatest value may well be that he does not allow us to be satisfied or pleased with ourselves."[101]

Notwithstanding his confusing statements, he does not flee from society but is engaged in it as "outsider". As he writes in his introduction to Concluding Unscientific Postscript, most Christians would regard the very question he raises of true Christianity, or "eternal happiness", as a kind of "insolence", and he admits that it could be a "special kind of madness." The implication is that if what the rest of the world does is "same", then he, renouncing worldliness, is quite willing to be "mad". For he has found "truth". It is that Hell is within him, and must be accordingly lurcking within everyone. He wrote in his Journal of May 12, 1839. "The whole of existence frightens me...the most inexplicable thing of all is my own existence."[102] The world looks hostile for him.

H. Richard Neibuhr offers an interesting analysis of Kierkegaard's **Critique of Culture**: " Kierkegaardian existentialism gives up the culture problem as irrelevant to faith, not becuase it is existential and practical, but because it is individualistic and abstract; having abstracted the self from society as violently as any speculative philosopher ever abstracted the life of reason from his existence as a man. It abandons the social problem, not because it is insistent on the responsibility of the individual, but because it ignores the responsibility of the self

101. Walter Kaufmann : From Shakespeare to Existentialism, (New ed. Garden City, N. Y. : Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1960), p. 203.

102. Reinhard, K. F., The Existentialist Revolt, (Ungar, N. Y., 1960), p. 27.

too and for other selves."[103] Kierkegaard's hatred towards crowd., entire individulistic attitude, pinching satires, restlessness of inner conscience and detachment from corrupt age and rotten society, have been invariably inspiring the realist thinkers to seek remedy for encircling problems. "None of the latter religious existentialists has left a mark, like Kierkegaard, on literature or on philosophy."[104]

103. H. Richard Neibuhr : Social Existentialism, " in Christ and Culture (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 244.
104. Kaufmann : Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre p. 50.

CHAPTER FIVE

Karl Jaspers

Human Situation in the Twentieth Century

A cultural history of the world consists of golden periods in which man has felt his world to be a bed of roses. But, to-day the individual is regarded with indifference. The worker at the machine concentrating upon immediate aims has no time or inclination left for the contemplation of life and his personal meaning in the scheme of things.[1] "Daily affairs are carried on in conformity with fixed rules and habits. The desire to act in accordance with general conventions, to avoid startling anyone by the unusual...,"[2] is dominant in everyday life. The individual who passes forty begins to realize that the world has no more use for him. Immediate self-will is what primarily moves man since he has become a mere replaceable cog in the machinery. "The divorce of labour from pleasure deprives life of its possible gravity : public affairs have become mere entertainment..."[3] On closer analysis, we realize upheaval. "On the broader scope reality is divided against reality. Truth opposes truth. Every moral imperative is tainted by guilt for it must destroy others equally moral and equally imperative. It is the nature of the age to crush the greatness it finds in man."[4] Further, "...We may define our human situation by saying that no reliance can be placed in worldly existence."[5] Man in the modern age is forced to realize that every configuration within being is doomed to

1. Michel Bedford : Existentialism and Creativity, Philosophical Library, Inc. New York, 1972, p. 174.
2. Karl Jaspers : Man in the Modern Age, p. 47.
3. Ibid., p. 48.
4. Karl Jaspers : Tragedy is not Enough, p. 95.
5. Karl Jaspers : Way to Wisdom, p. 20.

failure.[6] However, failure is not necessarily all black, all negative. "The way in which man approaches his failure determines what he will become."[7] Failure leads man to seek redemption at the very least. "That, man is not God is the cause of his smallness and undoing. But that he can carry his human possibilities to their extreme and can be undone by them with his eyes open—that is his greatness."[8] Jaspers perceives that modern age is on the threshold of mounting uneasiness due to the rapid development of science and technology. Man is becoming slave of machine, and the overwhelming impact of science is ruining the consciousness of being and existence. He bears it out when he writes; "The anguish of human existence begins when scientific knowledge is mistaken for life-itselt and when all-that is not scientifically knowable is regarded as being non-existent. Science then becomes scientific superstition, and thus produces, under the guise of pseudo-science, the multitude of follies in which neither science nor philosophy nor faith have any place."[9]

Professor John Wild observes that such existence as perceived by Jaspers will be guided by five principles of philosophic faith[10] : (1) there is something transcending the world ; (2) there is an unconditioned imperative—at all times and at all places personal freedom is to be respected and maintained ; (3) man is not perceptible—always weak, dependent, and inadequate; (4) but he needs not rely exclusively on himself; he has access to something transcendent between God and

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6. Michel Bedford : Existentialism and Creativity, op, cit., p. 178.

7. Karl Jaspers : Way to Wisdom, p. 23.
8. Karl Jaspers : Tragedy is not Enough, p. 55 f.
9. Karl Jaspers : "Science and Philosophy in the present intellectual Situation," Universtias Vol. 8, No. 4. 1966. Quoted in M. N. Sinha : A Primer of Existentialism, p. 26.

10. John Wild : The Challenge of Existentialism, p. 158.

existence.[11]

Boundary Situation

Modern man, remaining in a field of shifting forces, is himself a centre of urges which these either aid or obstruct him. It is satisfying, irritating, gloomy, or hopeless. They resist theoretical analysis and are insurmountable. Hence, Jaspers has called them boundary situations.[12] Six of them have been widely accepted and discussed by other writers. The First is something we may call it situationality,[13]—the fact that while we may succeed in escaping from one situation, it is only to fall into another. The Second is the fact of chance and fortune.[14] The Third is suffering (Leider)[15], which dominates many situations and threatens others. The Fourth is the fact of human struggle and conflict.[16] The Fifth limiting situation is the fact of guilt.[17] The Sixth and final one is the fact of death.[18] These facts establish the essential limit of our being. "This is a unique feature of existential thought. It is a clear-cut challenge to the idealist notion of a friendly universe, and to the innumerable forms of sentimental optimism."[19] In this way, Existenz, then, does not involve a "Madhyama mārga' (middle path) between two extremes, but rather a living in full awareness of the two polarities and a soaring of spirit through the whole range of possibilities that come in between."[20] So Jaspers says that

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11. Cf. Way to Wisdom, pp. 85-87, 93-99; Cf. Perennial Scope of Philosophy, Ch. 2.
12. Karl Jaspers : Philosophie, Vol. 2, Chap. 7.
13. Ibid., p. 204.
14. Ibid., pp. 216 ff.
15. Ibid., pp. 230-231.
16. Ibid., pp. 233 ff.
17. Ibid,. pp. 246 ff.
18. Ibid., pp, 220 ff.
19. John Wild : Challenge of Existentialism, p. 80.
20. Margarett Chatterji : The Existentialist Outlook, p. 118.

"possible Existenz soars in the boundary situation to the experience of knowing itself as one with its transcendence, in an origin which it conceives in the boundary situation of being."[21]

Jaspers considers that our entry into transcendence comes about through "the Encompassing". Our experience reveal a striving towards totality : "...everything that is an object for us, even though it be the greatest, is still always with another, is not yet all...we always live and think within a horizon. But the very fact that it is a horizon indicates something further which again surrounds the given horizon."[22] The concept of horizon encourages Jaspers to elucidate the form of "the Encompassing". "The Encompassing is not a horizon within which every determinate mode of Being and truth emerges for us, but rather that within which every particular horizon is enclosed as in something absolutely comprehensive which is no longer visible as a horizon at all."[23] The modes of the Encompassing distinguished by him are Being in itself, "conceived as Nature, world, or God", and secondly "the Encompassing which we are."

Following the foot-prints of the great philosophers of the past, Jaspers declared that the central concern of the philosopher is Being.[24] The philosopher seeks for an illumination of existence through his "philosophic reflection", his inner action. The philosopher, no less than the man of religion, is concerned with what Jaspers calls "cipher". "When the ciphers become inaudible, all becomes dark and desolate around us. But when we hear them, we do not find peace."..."The empyrean of ciphers, with their many meanings, takes the place of the solid ground of a credo."[25] Man's ontological consciousnes is found

21. Jaspers : Philosophie, Vol. II, p. 204.
22. Reason and Existence, p. 52.
23. Ibid., p. 52.
24. Margarett Chatterji : The Existentialist Outlook, p. 123.
25. Philosophy is for Everyman, Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc. N. Y., p. 95.

in "the possibility of reaching the cipher language, and in regard to existence it will remain as the boundless will to know about all mundane being in its ever-particular definition."[26] Jaspers does not give a positive content to what he means by 'cipher', and he has said on many occasions that ciphers are not to be confused with symbols. Yet ciphers are "the foot-steps of God". They are "vessels of transcendence". Rooted as he is in Existenz, man yet has nostalgia for the infinite, an enabling space in which "apparent Nothingness is transformed into that from which authentic being speaks to us."[27]

Jaspers is peculiarly opposed to Marx and Freud because, he says, they put forward 'a world-view in the guise of science'— in Freud's case 'a barren hateful world-view concealed behind a humanitarian form.' But it is worth-noticing that Darwin, too, lies beyond the limits of Jasper's toleration; his work, according to Jaspers, 'implies the destruction of all authentic life.'

Jaspers' Concept of the Tragic Dilemma

Looking into the philosophical discussion of Jaspers, one is acquainted with the fact that much, if not all, of what man does is destined to be destroyed.[28] Jaspers' tragic point of view "sees human need as suffering as anchored in metaphysics."[29] "Without such a metaphysical basis, we have only misery, grief, misfortune, mishap and failure. The tragic, however, is visible only to a kind of knowledge that transcends all these."[30] Tragic awareness is capable of redeeming man from his potential state of worthlessness and misery. By struggling with his situation man often finds himself able to transcend the misery. As man wrestles with the tragic, one of two things happen—

26. Karl Jaspers : Philosophie, Vol. II p. 227.
27. Karl Jaspers : Way to Wisdom, pp. 37-38.
28. Michel Bedford : Existentialism and Creativity, op. cit., p. 178.
29. Karl Jaspers : Tragedy is not Enough, p. 74.
30. Ibid.

"Either the tragic remains intact, and man liberates himself by enduring it and transforming himself with it, or else tragedy itself is, so to speak, redeemed : it ceases to be; it becomes pact."[31]

The meaning of "existence" is further "illustrated" when it is contrasted with "Dasein"; the simple "being-there" of empirical reality. It is that which is generally designated as the "reality" whose laws and structures are studied by science : "The whole of *Dasein* in the world...The world is Dasein which confronts me as the always determined being of objects; I myself am Dasein as far as I am an empirical being."[32] The empirical reality of the world and the empirical reality of the human Dasein are intertwined. They cannot even be conceived independently each other : "Neither is the world...without me who knows it, nor can I be without the world in which alone I am what I am. There is no world without me, nor am I without the world."[33] Human Dasein is not "existence" says Jaspers, but man in his Dasein is "possible existence", (mogliche Existenz). Man is "that being who is not but who can be and ought to be and who therefore decides his temporality whether or not he is to be eternal..."[34] While Dasein is absolutely temporal, existence is both temporal and timelessly. "Dasein realises itself in the being of the world; possible existence is in the world as in a territory in which it can manifest itself."[35]

The philosophic search for being moves,[36] according to Jaspers, in three main directions : toward "the world", toward "possible existence", and toward "transcendence". The search for the world leads to "world-orientation", the search for

31. Ibid., p. 76.
32. Karl Jaspers : Philosophie, I, p. 28.
33. Ibid., I, p. 62.
34. Ibid., II, p. 2.
35. Ibid., II, p. 1. f.
36. Michel Bedford : Existentialism and Creativity, op. cit., p. 180.

possible existence leads to the step-by-step "illumination of existence", and the search for transcendence leads into the proximity of the fullness of being. The tragic antinomies of existence have been widely discussed by Jaspers. He calls them "the law of the day and the passion of the night", the law of the day "imparts order to human life, it demands clarity, coherance, fidelity, reasonableness. It insists that something worthwhile he realized in the world, constructed in time; that temporal Dasein be given a definite content in virtue of the eternal and the infinite. But the passion of the night breaks down every order and plunges man into the abyss of nothingness...The law of the day knows the night only as a limit... I action, it thinks of life only, not of death. But the passion of the night is lovingly and fearfully related to death, its friends and its enemy."[37] What then is the ultimate term of this polarity and perpetual "tension" of human existence? "The Ultimate", says Jaspers, "is shipwreck" (Das Scheitern ist das Letzte). Human existence in the world is destined to suffer shipwreck.[38]

The Kantian Background of Jaspers' Philosophy

Jaspers' statement that he ascertained the faith by which he lives[39] "guided by the Bible and by Kant", is a remarkably telling index of his attitude toward the author of the celebrated Critiques.[40] To be sure, Jaspers recognises Kant's *lapsus judicit*. He frames the list of his tautologies, vicious circles, and contradictions,[41] and then tells us that "all sorts of statements

37. Karl Jaspers : Philosohpie, III, p. 105.
38. Ibid., III, p, 220, f.
39. Myth and Christianity : An Inquiry into the Possibility of Religion and Myth (with Rudoff Bultmann). Translated by Norbert Guterman, New York : Noonday, 1958, p. 78.
40. Charles F. Wallraff; Karl Jaspers : An Intro. to his Philosophy, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1970, p. 93.
41. Karl Jaspers : The Great Philosophers, Translated by Ralph Manheim, 2 Volumes, New York : Harcourt, Brace and World, 1962 & 1966, p. 78.

can be found in Kant; he even said that the world is conditioned "by our brain'. Kant himself seems to have expressed all the distortions of Kantianism."[42]

Jaspers, cherishing a zeal to know the secret of Being, is convinced by the thoughts of Kant and the Idealists of East and West. As long as we move within the 'subject-object-split' the world is merely phenomenal, a construction of our mind. "All being must be objectified for us in such forms, it becomes phenomenon for us, it is for us as we know it, and not as it is in itself. Being is neither the object that confronts us, whether we perceive it or think it, nor is it the subject."[43] Jaspers believes with Kant that we are citizens of two worlds-one material and the other spiritual, and that the latter represents true reality. Kant denied the possibility of theoretical knowledge of things-in-themselves, but he held that ethics offers a key to metaphysical knowledge. "Where Kant was certain, Jaspers is doubtful. Kant was certain of causal laws governing Nature, and of the binding character of the world law. Jaspers, on the contrary, is opposed to "objectivities", because they seem to curtail the freedom of the individual."[44]

A modern critic observes that "one great difficulty between the two men seems to lie in the fact that Kant's approach was predominantly religious, obsessed by the idea of moral obligation, of the categorical imperative, whereas Jaspers was obsessed by the idea of man's self-relating to the Transcendental or ultimate ground of experience; and saw in Kierkegaard and Nitzsche the symbols of the two poles of human existence, two opposed possibilities of man."[45] Whereas Kierkegaard was a fearless follower of Christian faith, Jaspers laid the

42. Ibid., I, p. 264.
43. Karl Jaspers : The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 14.
44. F. N. Heinemann : Existentialism and Modern Predicament, Harper and Row, Publishers New York and Evanston, 1958, p. 66.
45. Copleston : Philosophers and Philosophies, p. 163.

emphasis on 'philosophical truth', man's self-relating to the ground of existence. When writing of the existentialists Prof. Ayer remarks that "to be told to live authentically is not really to be told how to live."[46] This is obvious truth to Jaspers.

Freedom

Like Kierkegaard, Jaspers finds that the harmony of mankind has been seriously imperilled by the rise of mediocrity. "To-day we are living in an era of the most terrible catastrophes. It seems as though everything that had been transmitted to us were being melted down, and yet there is no convincing sign that a new edifice is in the making."[47] Further he explains : "Everything has been questionable, the substance of every-thing threatened. It used to be said that we were living in a time of transition, but now every newspaper is talking of the world crisis."[48] To compound the situation, the author indi-cates that no simple solution to the crisis may be found. "It is of multiple causation, so that it cannot be overcome by dealing with this or that particular cause, but must be appre-hended, endured and mastered as our world situation."[49] As man is confronted by his limitations, he finds it necessary to leave physical reality and "he builds for himself a second world, the world of mind...but in this soaring flight he trans-cends life."[50]

According to Jaspers, the state of Dasein's being condition-ed on the empirical level can neither prove nor disprove the

46. Ayer : Metaphysics and Common Sense, p. 218.
47. Karl Jaspers : Way to Wisdom, tr. Ralph Manheim (New Haven : Yale University Press, 1954), p. 103.
48. Karl Jaspers : Man in the Modern Age, tr. Eden and Cedar Paul (New York : Donbleday Anchor Books, 1957), p. 83.
49. Ibid., p. 84.
50. Jaspers : Man in the Modern Age, p. 123.

existentiality of freedom.[51] "Freedom...is not to be discovered by research. It is to act in that original certitude of one's self which never inquires into the objective fundamentals of itself."[52] Jaspers agrees with Kierkegaard that the very consciousness of freedom entails an uncertainty, a lack of prediction. According to the philosophy of Jaspers, the situational character of Existenz comprises of three principal eventualities: being in the world, being-amidst-the-others and being-towards-transcendence. Every situation, Jaspers tells us, is revocable. I can 'alter' it by the aid of technique, politics or annihilation. One can recall here Andre's Malraux's famous principle that the remedy against the absurdity of the world is action. But, when even in an altered situation I still happen to continue as a Dasein-in-a-situation, the Daseins' inheritance is called the 'situation-limit', "......the situations are for the empirical being", says Jaspers, "the situation-limit for the possible Existenz is Being."[53]

Authentic Existence Contrasted with Inauthentic Existenz

Instead of choosing to be authentic, the inauthentic person too often prefers to renounce himself and to plunge into the busy-work of life as into the waters of oblivion.[54] In the life which has no destiny one finds that the present is nothing more than a momentray effort to achieve enjoyment of life. "Man wins destiny only through ties : not through coercive ties imposed on him as an important creature by great forces from without; but by ties freely comprehended which he makes his own. Such ties hold together, so that it is not flittered away but becomes the actuality of his possible existence."[55]

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51. Ramakant Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 79.
52. Jaspers : Man in the Modern Age, p. 26.
53. Dufremm M. and Ricoeur, P, Karl Jaspers, p. 175, Quoted in Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 79.
54. Karl Jaspers : Man in the Modern Age, p. 180.
55. Ibid., p. 202.

Man might tranquilize himself in the self-forgetful pleasures of life, fancing himself to have gone back to nature in the peace of the timeless.[56] In such type of attempts to relax and enjoy life, man finds an immediate aid via television and the cinema. Huge production has been a damaging force which encourages unauthentic existence. Industry has created a binding situation in which man finds himself to be only a cog in the wheel of industry. "Work and nothing but work performed day after day will, when performed, sink forthwith into the fathomless abyss of oblivion."[57] Again, in no other age has man belonged more to the masses than he has in the twentieth century. "It seems as if the world must be given over to mediocrities, to persons without a destiny, without rank or a difference, without genuinely human attributes."[58]

The Philosophy of Detachment

In contrast to the philosophy of Finiteness, as formulated by Heidegger, Jaspers turns us to Infinite.[59] Whereas Heidegger asserts that human existence is essentially finite, Jaspers replies that all authentic being whether God or man, is indefinite, or infinite. "For those who found support in the absoluteness of things and in a theory of knowledge confined to objects, the loss of them is nihilism. Exclusive reality and truth cannot be claimed for that which discourse and objective thinking have made determinate and hence finite."[60] In fact, however, which is called a "philosophical rebirth", "The fall from established positions (Festigketen) which, after all, were delusive, becomes an ability of floating. What seemed an abyss becomes

56. Ibid., p. 216.
57. Ibid., p. 204.
58. Ibid., p. 51. Quoted in Existentialism and Creativity, p. 164.
59. F. N. Hienemann : Existentialism and Modern Predicament, op. cit. p. 69.
60. Jaspers : Way to Wisdom, pp. 37-38.

space for freedom; apparent Nothingness is transformed into that from which authentic speaks to us."[61]

Hence a philosophy of evanescence emerges. "The reality of the world has an evanescent existence between God and existence." God remains invisible, inconceivable and unthinkable "No symbol or metaphor can describe Him and none may take His place. All metaphysical representations of God without exceptions are myths, meaningful as such when understood to be mere hints and parallels, but they become superstitions when taken for reality of God Himself."[62] Man likewise remains a non-object to himself which cannot be exhausted by knowledge, it can only be experienced.

Apparently, it is a return to Kierkegaard, to Biblical religion and to a quasi-medieval system of axioms. All this, however, happens, not in a straightforward, but in a broken manner.[63] It is said : "The *Bible* and Biblical religion form the foundation of our philosophising, provide such a lasting scheme of reference and are the source of irreplaceable conceptions. Western philosophising--whether we admit it or not—is always with the Bible, even when it suggests against it."[64] Jaspers reaches, in his development, the stage of philosophic faith, i. e, God is; there is an absolute imperative (Forderung); man is finite and cannot reach the stage of perfection (er ist unvollendbar); man can live guided by God; and, the reality of the world has an evanescent being (verschwindendes Dasein) between God and human existence. During the Middle Ages these propositions would have been pronounced as dogmas.[65]

61. Ibid.
62. Ibid. p. 48.
63. F. N. Hienemann : Existentialism and Modern Predicament, op. cit., p. 76.
64. Der Philosophische Glaube, p. 75 (The Perennial Scope of Philosophy, p. 97.
65. F. N. Heinenmann : Existentialism and Modern Predicament, op. cit., p. 76.

An Antidote to Immanence

The peculiar use of the word Existenz by Jaspers represents that it is an experience which can hardly be characterised exhaustively. Nothing which the Dasein denotes would refer strictly to the free and authentic existence of man.[66] Thus Jaspers says, "I am myself this being-there, as Existenz. I am Existenz to the extent to which I am far from being an object to myself. In that Existenz I recognise myself as independent..."[67] The authenticity of human reality is profoundly rooted in a distinct sort of transcendentalism.[68] Man's life in the ephemeral world, therefore, is nothing but the mortal situation of Dasein—a 'shipwreck.'

All knowledge that claims to be impersonal and scientific is, according to Jaspers, 'soulless' and 'sterile'. "Indeed different philosophical schools in the past, like, materialism, empiricism and positivism, declined to make an endeavour to touch 'human spirit' which in a sense they identified with the subject-matter of science."[69] They have been so inconsistent and superficial in their attempts that they have not only reduced the existing individual to a 'case' or an 'instrument', but also obliterated the most intrinsic problem of his destiny and faith. "...the world is not simply that which is there empirically, fixed, independent and practical, it is also the world which I love, which I hate, which I animate beyond all practical end."[70] According to Jaspers, life welcomes reason. It is only through reason that Existenz becomes lucid and clear. "The reason and Existenz," therefore, "are not two opposed powers

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66. Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 70.
67. Jaspers : Tonquedec, Joseph de, L' existence d' apres Karl Jaspers, 1945, p. 14.
68. Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 70.
69. Ibid., p. 72.
70. Dufremme, M. and Ricoeur, P. Karl Jaspers et la Philosophie de L' existenz, 1947, p. 101.

which struggle with one another for victory. Each exists only through the other. They mutually develop one another and find through one another clarity and reality.'[71] Prof. Sinari rightly comments : "The empirical manifestation of Existenz assumes a tendency which surpasses itself. Actually, man's being-in-the world is not only the realisation of his possibility, but also the creation of the possibility of possibilities."[72]

Logic of Cipher

Jaspers holds that the phenomenal reality is the transfiguration of transcendence, whose Being moves in Ciphers and creates relations. Transcendence spreads itself through diverse signs : the concrete and objective ciphers. Jaspers writes : "The being of the transcendence or the being-himself of the individual, separate and absolute as it is, is inaccessible. If I pretend to realize it in part, I lose it...I am not certain of myself, and thence of the transcendence, concept as being a Dasein......I cannot know the absolute nature of transcendence except within the cipher of my proper historicity.[73]

One of the salient points of Jaspers thinking is to show that the tensions of human life are entirely due to the state of dislocation of man's worldly existence from Being or God. We feel sorrow "at the thought that everything that I love in the world, including myself, is wholly mortal."[74] There is nothing given to my consciousness which I can abnegate. My way has already been fixed for me by the cipher of my Existenz.[75] "Waste" writes Jaspers," is the last word."[76] 'The other' says Sartre, are the menace and a hell. However, for Jaspers, the others-in-communication raises one of the most mysterious

71. Ibid., p. 69.
72. Sinari : Reason and Existentialism, p. 75.
73. Jaspers : Tonquede, J. de L' existence ... p. 81.
74. Ibid. p. 91.
75. Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 87.
76. Jaspers : Tonquede, J. de L' existence ... p. 91.

ontological problems, namely, the magnitude of Dasein. "I am unable to become myself", warns he, "if the other does not deserve to become *himself*; I cannot be free if the other is not free..."[77]

Ultimate Situation

Jaspers' special contributions to the existential movement,[78] must here be considered.[79] Philosophising is stimulated by so-called ultimate situations (Grenz situationen), i. e., situations of profound importance that, although often obscured and ignored, can never be changed. "There are situations which remain essentially the same even if their momentary aspect changes and their shattering force is obscured : I must die, I must suffer, I must struggle, I am subject to chance, I involve myself inexorably in guilt."[80]

The Ultimate Situation of Historical Determinacy

The first ultimate situation[81] to be noted is set off by its extreme generality from those most commonly mentioned. "I exist in this specific historical time and sociological position, I am a man or a woman, and am young or old. I am dependent upon opportunities and chances."[82] My situation inhabits me in various perspectives. I fall a prey in the hands of chance. "What I become and the tasks I take in hand depend upon

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77. Ibid. p. 56.
78. See Edwin Latzel, "The Concept of Ultimate Situation, -" The Phil of Karl Jaspers, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp. New York : Tudor, 1957, p. 183.
79. Charles F. Wallraf, Karl Jaspers : An Intro. to his Philosophy, Princeston University Press, 1970, p. 142.
80. Jaspers : The Way to Wisdom, p. 20.
81. Charles F. Wallraf, Karl Jaspers, An Intro. to Phil., op. cit., p. 143.
82. Nietzshe : An Introduction to His Philosophical Activity, p. 202.

what the occasion offers. My growth and development must accord with present sociological and economic opportunities, and the ties of love that bind me to my fellows depend upon accidental meetings within the everyday world."[83] From this complicated situation two important consequence follow.[84] First of all, since our way of instructing experience is demonstrably capable of changing radically, there being, as Jaspers puts it, "no theoretical reason why in the course of time new categories should not be discovered *ad infinitum*",[85] the world as it appears to us should be regarded as only one of a large number of experienceable worlds. In the second place, every specific individual is blinded to many possibilities. The intellectual heritage of an inevitably sets limits to its speculative accomplishments.[86]

Specific Ultimate Situation : Conflict

It seems somewhat quite difficult to prepare a definite list of specific ultimate situations than to enumerate all categories[87]— or "category mistakes". But it may be said that any list should include at least struggle (Kampf), guilt (Schuld), death (Tod), and suffering (Leiden).[88] At the level of everyday existence, conflict with others is inevitable.[89] Nietzsche would have it, "Life itself is essentially appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and the weak, suppression, severity, obstruction of peculiar forms, incorporation, and at the least, putting it mildest, exploitation..."[90] Intellectual and moral growth depends upon

83. Jaspers : Philosophie, II, p. 216.
84. Charles F. Wallraf, Karl Jaspers, An Intro. to his Phil., op. cit., p. 143.
85. Jaspers : The Great Philosophers : I, p. 254.
86. Jaspers : Philosophie, II, p. 19.
87. Charles F. Wallraf : An Intro. to his Phil of Jaspers, op. cit., p. 150.
88. See The Way to Wisdom, 20-22, Philosophie, Chap. vii.
89. Jaspers : Philosophie, II, p. 235.
90. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil, trans. Helen Zimmer, Sec: 259.

internal conflicts. Existenz, obliged to realize its capacities and powers, as we are told, "is in a process of self-development that amounts to a struggle with itself."[91] This struggle with the self never ends.

The Ultimate Situation of the Questionableness of All Existence

Jaspers holds : "In every ultimate situation the ground is, as it were, removed from under my feet. Being, when regarded as empirical existence, cannot be grasped as a fixed and stable continuant."[92] Again, he continues : "The ultimate being ultimately succumbs to penetrating critical questioning, and even loving communication appears within the phenomenal world as struggle."[93] Thus, "the questionableness of all existence means the impossibility of finding peace within existence as such. The way in which this latter, in all ultimate situations seems shattered through and through is its antinomical structure."[94] In this case he becomes confused and chaotic and is easily put to road. "The more easily he sees the ever -present antinomies, the more insecure he becomes and the more his conduct, his knowledge, and his very life are traumatized."[95] He lives by a series of accidents, and although he may forge ahead by making a display of consistency, he is all fond, utterly faithless and irresponsible.[96] In the second place, recognition of the discordant and the false is a mark of honesty and a presupposition of Existenz. "To experience ultimate situations and to exist is one and the same thing."[97] Believing with Nietzsche

91. Jaspers : Philosophie, II, p. 234
92. Ibid., II, p. 247.
93. Charles F. Wallraf : Karl Jaspers, An Intro. to his Phil., op. cit., p. 158.
94. Jaspers : Philosophie, II. p. 247.
95. Ibid., p. 240.
96. Ibid., p. 354.
97. The Phil. of Karl Jaspers, (ed)-Paul Arthur Schilpp, pp. 186, 188, 189, 192.

that "even among philosophers nothing is more rare than intellectual integrity,"[98] he says.

Existence and Transcendence

Existenz, unlike the scientific understanding, cannot demand proof.[99] For it, as Paul Ricoeur tells us, "only the moment of choice, of anxious venture, of responsibility without guarantee or security, bears the stamp of authenticity."[100] In connection with the things of spirit, the will to believe, whatever the authors of traditional proofs may have intended to accomplish, still "all the proofs of the existence of God...differ essentially from scientific proofs. They are attempts to express the experience of man's ascent to God in terms of thought. They are roads of thought by which we come to limits at which the consciousness of God suddenly becomes a natural presence."[101] Faith (Glaube) is not knowledge but "non-knowledge." It relates to the unseen, which though absent, is still hoped for. "A proved God is no God...A certainty of the existence of God...as a premise, not a result..."[102] In Jasper's words, we see; "Everything thinkable is rejected as invalid by transcendence. Transcendence can be defined by no predicate although all categories are applicable as means of saying that it is not a quality or a quantity it is not a relation or a ground, and it is not one, not many, not being, not nothing, etc."[103] Such distinction of thought which "conveys the 'that" but not the 'what' of the Deity",...prepares the way for reading the ciphers, for

98. Nietzsche : An Intro. to the Understanding of His Philosophical Activity, p. 201.
99. Charles F. Wallraf : Karl Jaspers; An Intro. to his Phil., op. cit., p. 181.
100. The Phil of Karl Jaspers, (ed)-Paul Arthur Schilpp, p. 615.
101. Jaspers : The Way to Wisdom, p. 42.
102. Jaspers : The Perennial Scope of Phil, trans. Ralph Manheim, New York : Philosophical Library, 1949, p. 32.
103. Jaspers : Philosophie, III, p. 38-39.

it "provides space...that can always...a fulfilment in keeping with its historical situation."[104]

Jaspers is sometimes said to favour demythologization,[105] and sometimes said to oppose it. It is true that, as J. I. Leeuonatein maintains, " Jaspers succeeds in freeing Transcendence from the last remnants of mythical imaginary ..by means of his basic idea of the Encompassing,"[106] so that he can actually "adopt the content of the religious tradition by demythologizing it",[107] it is equally true that for him "all of reality becomes mythical "since" myths figure along with poetry and the plastic arts among 'the original spiritual institutions,...' which render truth present."[108] For as the contrary with Rudolf Bultmann made clear, Jaspers dymythologizes only in so far as he insists that "mythological ideas disclose their truth only after having been divested of their empirical reality."[109]

The Encompassing

Our language permits us to characterize anything as an object.[110] Thus, somewhat surprisingly, Jaspers speaks, at least once, of the world as "something that becomes an object to me",[111] and of "encompassing (that) has become an

104. Ibid., p. 39.
105. Charles F. Wallraf : Karl Jaspers, An Intro to his Phil, op. cit., p. 187.
106. "Judaism in Jaspers' Thought," in The Phil. of Karl Jaspers, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp, p. 662.
107. Ibid., p. 658.
108. "The Relation of Jaspers' Phil to Religion", in The Phil. of K. Jaspers, ed, Schilpp, p. 662.
109. Myth and Christianity : An Inquiry into the Possibility of Religion with Myth, (with Rudoff Bultman) trans. by Norbent Gerterman, New York : Noonday, 1958, p. 86.
110. Charles F. Wallraf : Karl Jaspers, op.cit., p. 191.
111. Jaspers : Existenz-philosophie (3rd ed), Berlin : De Gruyter, 1964, p. 16.

object."[112] But the term can be given a precise meaning. From Jaspers' neo-Kantian point of view, an object not only stands over against a subject, as a German term "Gegenstand" suggests, but it possesses a number of extremely important characteristics : (1) An object is distinct and distinguishable from the objects as well as from the subject. It is to objects that the principle, commis determinatio est negatio, applies.[113] (2) Objectivity is a source of clarity, and the call (for example) the world and the soul objects is among other things, to claim that they can be cognized clearly.[114] (3) Unlike Transcendence and Existenz, objects are immanent. They appear only within the world.[115] (4) They are not things in themselves, for their formal aspects derive from the interpretative activity of the perpetual apparatus and the understanding.[116] (5) While they differ from illusions and hallucinations, they are phenomena—mere appearances.[117]

The Modes of the Encompassing That We Are

Various modes may be described as "encompassing" because, as we have seen, like the monades of Leibnitz and the actual entities of Whitehead, they contain or represent the entire universe.[118] In terms made familiar by William James, Dasein, can be said once encompassed and encompassing, for there is a kind of "dualism connoted by such double-barrelled terms as 'experience' Exist ?"[119]

112. Von der Wahrheit, Munich : R. Piper, 1947, p. 604.
113, Jaspers : The Way to Wisdom, p. 30.
114. Existenz-philosophie, op. cit., p. 14.
115. Ibid., p. 15.
116. Ibid., p. 16.
117. Ibid., pp. 16, 17, Quoted in Charles F. Wallraf : Karl Jaspers : An In troduction to his Phil, Princeton University Press, 1970, p. 191.
118. See Charles F. Wallraf : Karl Jaspers, op. cit., p. 199.
119. In Essays in Radical Empiricism and A. Phuralistic Universe. ed., Ralph Barton Perry (New York : Longmans Green, 1947), p. 10.

Existenz and Historicity

From the presence of Existence in the here and now, a number of curious paradoxes arise.[120] In the first place, the affairs of this world are at once infinitely important and of no account whatsoever.[121] Regarded morally, empirical existence is infinitely important, but seen from the standpoint of transcendence the affairs of this world are as nothing, for everything quickly passes away and is gone. To stand in this tension—to recognise at once the seriousness of our moral acts and the evanescence of all worldly events—is to be aware of historicity.[122] In the second place, historicity involves a union of freedom and necessity. "I seem to myself to be unavoidably determined by what has already been decided, and still to be basically free in so far as I am capable of making my own decisions."[123] In the third place, historicity involves a synthesis of time and eternity. At this very moment, I may experience eternal truths, or become aware of events. As summarised by Hoffman, "This moment, the authentic instance, that of decision, of intense, as Kierkegaard has pointed out, must be opposed to the passing moment. Between the two, and subsuming both, historicity mediates..."[124] Finally, as we have seen, Jaspers asserts the historicity of truth itself. From his standpoint it appears as inevitable that "discursive thought can never arrive at a universally valid concept of Being, but only at one view of Being among others."[125]

Historical truth, thus understood, is different from the truth of science.[126] At this level there can be no question of corres-

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120. Charles F. Wallraf : Karl Jaspers, op. cit., p. 206.
121. In Essays in Radical Empiricism, op. cit., p. 122.
122. Ibid.
123. Jaspers : Philosophie, II, p. 125.
124. Kurt Hoffman : The Basic Concepts of Jaspers Phil. in The Phil of Karl Jaspers, ed. Paul Arthur, p. 102.
125. Ibid., p. 103.
126. Charles F. Wallraf : Karl Jaspers, op. cit., p. 210.

pondence with an object, and no possibility of universal validity. As R. F. Grahau explains: "For the illumination of Existenz thus conceived, there can be no objective criteria of truth...Each existenz is unique, unrepeatable, irreplacable. Consequently, there is no guarantee that even at the level of Existenz the conceptual clarification which will prove true for one Existenz will also hold for another."[127]

A Critical Estimate

In one sense it is almost impossible to offer criticisms of Jaspers philosophy. For, in his conception, philosophy becomes philosophising. This consists of inner movements of thought on the part of individual persons in concrete situations. Its inclination is not to present objective and universal results, but the *illumination* of the thinker. Jaspers grants that this is achieved by construeing, "conceptual schemes, which make assertions, and which...are to be culled out as systematic insights into ..structures of being human."[128] For Jaspers, as for Nietzsche, the idea is to become what you are.

None of the features of human existence which Jaspers mentions requires a transcendental approach. Existenz, spirit, and consciousness are indefinitely interpretable levels of finite reality. The metaphysics of Jaspers is the least satisfactory fact of his philosophising. The ideal of human community is not perceptibly furthered by the claim that "you and I, though separated in existence, are one in Transcendence." Nor do discussions which represents the realms of the experienced world as ciphers of Transcendence aid in illuminating the features of our world. As ciphers they are incapable of affecting the way we relate to them. His ontological arguments do not secure the reality of the world. It gives no answer to the

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127. Karl Jaspers : Communication through Transcendence" in Existential Philosophers, Jr. (New York : Mc Graw-Hill, 1967), p. 129.
128. Schilpp : The Phil of Karl Jaspers, p. 819.

questions which start philosophical thought : why is there anything at-all ? Why not nothing ? Or what is being itself ? These remain as much a mystery after Jaspers' analysis as they were before. Relating existence to Transcendence in this way gives no new ideas, no solutions to problems and suggests no new and creative schemes. Instead, it seems to demand that we interpret it and one can rest with the statement : Being is.

Dr. Radhakrishnan has presented a graphic picture of Jaspers's contributions in a few but balanced sentences. He writes : "For Karl Jaspers, existence is not an idea but the most concrete form of experience. It has not the character which abstract ideas have. To know oneself as a finite being in a world which conditions and restricts one's liberty is to know oneself as transcended. All that exists tries to get beyond itself. 'Man cannot remain himself except, by living in a relationship with the Transcendent.' When Jaspers insists that man is 'open to Transcendent', he is referring to the capacity of man to transcend himself. The conviction of the meaninglessness of life leads us to a new being which promises creativity, meaning and hope. There is need for believing that below the actuality of existence there is the mystery of Being."[129]

Notwithstanding, his concept of individuality and freedom, his interpretation of Transcendence rotates round the conventionalist concept of God. No doubt, he is a philosopher of Transcendental existentialism, yet still, he is nowhere prepared to give a last solution. In the words of H. J. Blackam, "Jaspers tries to bring his ship safely through Scylla and Charybdis, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, and we seem to find his cast firm upon one and then upon the other. The obvious criticism is that in choosing this passage he has doomed himself to founder; in particular, that his philosophic faith in Transcendence is an important substitute for Christ-faith in the God of salvation, which in the ruined world, which he gives us is a poor sort of

129. S. Radhakrishnan : Religion and Culture, Hind Pocket Books (P) Ltd., 1968, p. 106.

joke."[130] In addition to this, the comment of Prof. Margarett Chatterji is worth mentioning. "He seems to be the only one who is concerned with the rediscovery of reason inspite of what he calls the "ship-wreck of reason." Jaspers has the advantage of not starting from the artificial assumption of alienation; either between man and the natural world or between man and man. Instead of speaking of dichotomies and antinomies Jaspers speaks of the polarity and tension."[131]

Consequently one may agree with a recent critic while he holds that the existentialism of Jaspers is equally opposed to determinism, positivism, and scientific materialism, on the one hand, and to the Cartesian and Hegelian types of idealism, on the other. "Jaspers centres his philosophy in the concrete situation of the concretely existing and unique individual, emphasising the elements of personal courage, and the anguish which the individual experiences in view of imminent shipwreck and death. What counts in the drama of human existence is not the generalities of scientific laws but the unique and irreplaceable value of human personality."[132] He further comments, "The epistemological pre-sumptuousness of the idealist and the epistemological despair of the "existentialist" are both unrealistic because they both misjudge the nature and the capacities of the human intellect."[133] "He who wants to be true must take the risk of erring of placing himself in the wrong," writes Jaspers; "he must push matters to an extreme; he must take place them on the knife's edge, so that there may be a true and real decision."[134] This type of precept, if carried out, will spoil the dignity of laws and rules of thought and action.

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130. H. J. Blackam : Six Existentialist Thinkers, 1961, p. 63.
131. Margarett Chatterji : The Existentialist Outlook, p. 126.
132. Kurt F. Reinhart : The Existentialist Revolt, Fredrick Ungar Publishing Co. New York, 1960, p. 200.
133. Ibid., p. 200.
134. Jaspers : Philosophie, II, p, 69.

Lastly, "Karl Jaspers' existentialism is a philosophy of "becoming" rather than a philosophy of "being". As such it is anti-intellectualistic and voluntaristic. Jaspers values more highly the *elan* of an endless seeking and striking than the transquility of possession—regardless of whether it be a question of truth or being or God."[135] Prof. L. Saxena, a serious thinker in contemporary Indian philosophy, observes.[136] "Jaspers like Kierkegaard transcends the level of the ethical which can be universalised and held valid for all rational beings as is done —in their opinion, by Kant and others. Truth at the level of Existenz holds unconditionally true for the solitary communicating Existenz, but for that reason cannot be presented as a "universally valid" truth.[137] Each individual exists for himself alone before Transcendence, deciphering in the innermost recesses of its being what is saying and receiving it and at the same time revitalizing itself in the light of whatever is offered to it. It is rightly called a "transforming appropriation", for life cannot be the same after the truth has been received." For such a truth no "final picture' is possible, it is manifest "only as a demand that consumes temporal existence."[138] Professor Saxena further explains, "Jaspers seems to be speaking in the present context like the mystic although he has assiduously worked for dissociating his position from mysticism. Students of Indian Philosophy are well-conversant with these conclusions regarding the ultimate reality and its experiencing by the individual soul."[139]

135. Michel Bedford : Existentialism and Creativity, op. cit., p. 198.
136. Lakshmi Saxena : Encounter with Transcendence—A study in Theistic Existentialism, GDK. Publications, Delhi, pp. 64-65.
137. Reason and Existenz, p. 100, also p. 103.
138. Ibid., pp. 103-104.
139. Lakshmi Saxena : op. cit., p. 65.

CHAPTER SIX

Martin Heidegger

Being in the World

The definition of "existence" (Existenz), according to Heidegger, is essentially *a being towards*. "Existence", must always be grasped as a *standing out* from its being. The word "existence" comes from the latin *existere* which means "to stand forth", "to arise". By using the word "existence" in this etymological sense instead of with the sense of "being", Heidegger is characterising the Person as that which can transcend itself.[1] Heidegger states in Being and Time : "The Person is nothing, no substance, no object".[2] The analysis of the concept of being-in-the world yields the three obvious components : the world, the being who is in the world, and the relation of being-in-itself.[3] The world is that in which the Person lives;[4] as such there are various possibilities. "The world means the "public" world of "ours" or (That is, ours); "own" and closest(domestic, that is, the one at which we are at home) environment-world)."[5] Heidegger does not agree with Berkelian idealism. "His problem is to characterise the world as an aspect of our concrete being-in-the world instead of as a terminus of the scientific enterprise. Stated in Heidegger's own phrase, "the problem under consideration is not simply the world but the worldliness of the world."[6]

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1. Fernando Molina : Existentialism as Philosophy, p. 55.
2. Heidegger : Sein Und Zeit, p. 47.
3. Ibid., p. 53.
4. Ibid,, p. 65.
5. Ibid., p. 65.
6. Fernando Molina : op. cit., p. 60.

The being-in-the world is the manner in which the Person is "in" the world. Heidegger describes basic structures which constitute the manner of this *being-in*. The first of these structures, Befindlichkeit, translated roughly as "Self-encountering", Heidegger characterises as the state in which the Person has been brought before himself. The Person encounters himself as *being located* there. This state of being in the world at a definite place, yet without there being a compensation of why this place, is termed "thrownness" by Heidegger.[7] A second mode of relation of being-in is understanding (Verstehen). The Person always understands himself as a *projection out from* himself, a projection made possible by the fact that to exist is the essence of the Person.[8] But in this case, the existing in question is not toward the world as such, but is toward the Person's own possibilities. Furthermore, the Person, in its very manner of being, is *defined* as a' power-to-be.[9] Unlike Kierkegaard, for whom one's being (existence) was the only reality which could be known without being transformed into a possibility, for Heidegger the being of the Person is his possibilities.[10]

Heidegger holds that the "Worldliness or worldhood is to be understood as a constitutive element of Dasein, that is, as an existential."[11] Ontologically, "world is not a way of characterising those entities which Dasein essentially is not, it is rather a characteristic of Dasein itself."[12] The world of such Dasein is the environing world, the world of its surroundings. That world of everyday Dasein which is closest to it, is the environment. For this existential character of average being-in-the world, our investigation will take its course from

7. Ibid., p. 60.
8. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p, 12.
9. Ibid., p. 143.
10. Ibid., p. 42.
11. Walter Bimse : Martin Heidegger, p. 39,
12. Martin Heidegger : Being and Time, p. 92.

the idea of worldhood in general. We shall seek the worldhood of the environment (environmentality) by going through an ontological interpretation of those entities within-the-environment which we encounter as closest to us."[13] There is no such thing as an isolated ego, of which the isolation has to be overcome by establishing a relation with the other. The others are also copresent. They are not alien to us. "The world of Dasein is a world-with-(Mitwelt). Being-in is being-with others. Their being-in-themselves within-the-world is Dasein-with."[14]

The Problem of Being

Philosophy in the eyes of Heidegger is the clarification of what it means to ask about "Being". Questioning has its own logic. It determines the possibility of meaning and keeps thinking on the way. The danger, which Heidegger sees to be threatening man and philosophy to-day consists in not that "Being" has lost its meaning but in the loss of questioning.[15] The question of the meaning requires man's authentic engagement in the act of questioning and thinking. *"Only questioningly"*[16] do both Being and its meaning show themselves. The question of Being requires man "to ask the question, that is, to bring it about, to raise it, to feel its inevitability."[17] He invites man to question his historical being-in-the world, to disclose his authentic potentiality to be the da (there) of Being (Sein). For by "the hidden power of this question," says Heidegger, "each of us is gazed at least once."[18] This is not to say that it is a question with which man is "proximately" and "for the most part" conceived. The question of Being is not

13. Ibid., p. 94.
14. Ibid., p. 155.
15. C. M. Pathak : The Problem of Being in Heidegger, p. 3.
16. Martin Heidegger : An Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. by Ralph Marheim, (New York) Anchor Books, 1961), p. 171.
17, Ibid., p. 1
18. Ibid., p. 1.

something that lies upon the surface of everyday existence. It is rather the "ground" or "depth" question.[19]

The question about the meaning of Being is, therefore, a question distinct from historical and empirical questions about man and the entities alongside being-in-the-world; Meaning of Being "enters into the intelligibility of Dasein."[20] Herbert Spiegelberg in The Phenomenological Movement only represents the current mode of interpretation which maintains the Kehre theory in Heidegger's thought. He holds the view that Heidegger of Sein und Zeit who avers phenomenological standpoint "breaks off" and "ceased to talk phenomenology."[21] Spiegelberg goes on to say that only Heidegger "drifted away from his original conception of phenomenology" but that phenomenology "never was an integral part of his philosophy."[22] Later on, Heidegger surprisingly enough comes to be misunderstood by others as the "mystic poet and godless theologian", with "prophetic-clergymatic form of thinking."[23]

(A) The Centrality, Necessity and Structure of the Being Question

In preface to the seventh edition of Sein und Zeit, Heidegger reaffirms that the phenomenological ontology of existential structures of Dascin is necessary "road", "if our Dasein is to be stirred by the question of Being."[24] "Being is so closely related to the Da; there or the possibility of its disclosedness (da-sein) that this relatedness constitutes a *hermeneutic circle*—

19. Ibid., pp. 2-3.
20. Martin Heidegger : Being and Time, trans. by Jhon Macquare and Edward Robinson (New York, Harper and Row, 1962), p. 193.
21. Herbert Spiegelberg : The Phenomenological Movement, Vol. II, (The Hague : Martinus Nijhoff, 1965), p. 410.
22. Ibid., p. 410.
23. Laszlo Versenyi : Heidegger, Being and Truth (New Haven and London : Yale University, 1965), p. 16.
24. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p. 5.

the circle of being-there (Da-sein) and "Being" itself. The real problem of philosophy for Heidegger is not to transcend the "circle" but how "to come into it in the right way."[25]

The question of Being is both necessary and inevitable by the very constitution of man.[26] It may remain *forgotten*, unheaded, unasked but the fact is that it is *there* and possible "Each of us is gazed at least once, perhaps more than once, by the hidden power of this question, even if he is not aware of what is happening to him. The question looms in moments of great despair, when things tend to lose all their weight and all meaning becomes blurred...It is present in moments of rejoicing...The question is upon us in boredom...When everything about us seems to hopelessly commonplace that we no longer care whether anything is or is not."[27] Demand for literal translation and representation of "Being" is misguided. It fails to listen to the voice of signifying word (Phone semanticae). It represents, what Prof. Paul Ricoeur aptly says, "a crisis of language" which on its deeper level represents a "crisis of reflection."[28]

The logic of ontological difference shows that the meaning of "Being" is not swallowed up by the empirical structure of language. "Being" cannot be represented by one among "many senses of being". To put in linguistic form : "Being is *not* a being or a *this*."[29] The *what* of "being" is to be thought of and disclosed in the clearing of the logic of ontological difference which sees "the difference as difference", and not something altogether "Different". The ontological difference thus represent "the presence" (die Anwesenheit) of what is present

25. Ibid., p. 195.
26. C. M. Pathak : op. cit., p. 15.
27. Martin Heidegger : An Introduction to Metaphysics, pp. I-2.
28. Paul Ricoeur : Freud and Philosophy, trans. by Danis Savage, (New Haven and London : Yale University Press, 1976), p. 54.
29. C. M. Pathak : op. cit., p. 29.

in the difference between Being and beings. For, Being is not-a-thing (Sein aber ist Kein Ding).[30] Being as "presence" (als Anwesenheit) is the "unconcealedness, the rising from the unconcealedness, the entry into the unconcealedness the radiance, the rest, the hidden suddenness of possible absenting."[31]

(B) The Forgetfulness of Being

The forgetfulness of Being (Seinsvergessenheit) is one of the basic assumptions which helps to explain Heidegger's question of Being. "The forgetfulness of Being is not a modern antithesis to the Platonic doctrine of Anamnesis, for Heidegger, does not mean to hypostatize a pre-natal memory of the ideal realm of forms."[32] The forgetfulness of Being represents the existential relation of historical being-there (Da-Sein) in state of average everydayness or "lostness" to the fundamental question of Being. The concept of the forgetfulness of Being is not something Heidegger constructs to *destroy* metaphysics as real "decade-long attention paid to what has been, as evidenced in the metaphysical thinking of the west."[33] "Being" is not a metaphysical or "grammatical subject" hypostatized in a sentence or a mere slice of language; it is rather "something" which "pervades" the existential structures of Dasein, the modes of its being-in-the world, its states of mind, understanding and speech. It is "already there". "Being", furthermore is not an empty word, nor the question about its meaning

30. Martin Hidegger : "Zeit and Sein", L' endurance de la Pensee, p. 18.

31. Martin Heidegger : What is called Thinking? trans. by F. D. Wieck and J. Glenn Gray, (New York : Harper and Row, 1968), p. 237.

32. C. M. Pathak : The Problem of Being in Heidegger, op-cit., p. 36.

33. Heidegger : The Question of Being, p. 91.

a mere poetic exercise of language. It is rather "the worthiest of all questions."[34]

The idea of forgetfulness of Being is positive conception which presupposes the possibility of recollection of Being in thinking and speech. Heidegger says that the "oblivion" of Being preserves "untouched treasures", it is "the promise of a find, and only waits for its "search" and recovery. "Remem-berance applies to this concealment in which unconcealment (Aletheia) is based."[35] In historical perspective, a phenomeno-logical analysis of the word "forgetfulness" (Vergessenheit) reveals in Greek sense as "withdrawal into concealment". The counter-phenomenon to "forgetfulness" or "withdrawal into concealment" is "recollection' or "bringing into unconceal-ment. This counter-phenomenon of" "recollection" or "bringing into un-concealment" is the implied sense of Plato's doctrine of 'anamnesis'. That is; "catching-sight-once-again (hence) the revealing, of beings, so, in that by which they shine forth—" (das wieder-sugesicht-Bekommen, das Enthergen, namlich des Sei-ender iu seiem Aussehan).[36]

(c) The Clearing-ground

"Dasein" is the clearing-ground of Being. The word "Dasein" signifies the possibility of a "there" or "openness" (da) of Being (sein) in the world. Its phenomenological sense must be distinguished from the sense attributed to it "the language of metaphysics", in which Dasein was conceived to be "the reality of anything at all that is real, from God to a grain of sand."[37] The meaning of the word "existence", on the

34. Heidegger : An Introduction to Metaphysics, p. 168.
35. Heidegger : The Question of Being, p. 91.
36. Richardson, Heidegger : Through Phenomenology to Thought, Preface, pp. xii-xiii.
37. Martin Heidegger : "The Way back into the Ground of Metaphysics", Philosophy in the Twentieth Century. Vol. II. p. 212.

contrary, points to the fundamental meaning of Dasein as "clearing-ground" of Being. "In Being and Time the term existence is used exclusively for the being of man. Once 'existence' is understood rightly, the 'essence' of being there can be recalled in its openness."[38] Obviously, the meaning of "existence" and "Dasein" as the clearing-ground of Being defines the nature of Heidegger's philosophy which conceives "Being", as "the shelter that in view of its own-truth shelters man in his ex-sisting essence in such a way that it lodges ex-sistence in language."[39]

Dasein and Nothingness

The presentation of Being is made through Dasein. "However, Dasein is not something akin to substance or pure subjectivity, Its reality is essentially constituted by possibilities or potentialities. Its act is not determined from outside; it can go either this way or that, either conquer itself or be lost."[40] Heidegger remarks : "I am irreducibly myself, but can refuse to be myself, that is, I can transcend all inauthentic features of my existence and can alienate myself from all that I am now and here."[41] Thus, the nature of Dasein is comprehensive and the field in which it operates is complex.

Dasein makes an entry amidst multitude of objects in a number of relationships. Obviously it is impossible for Dasein to remain in isolation. "I am present to myself continually", remarks Husserl, "as someone who perceives, represents, thinks, feels, desires in present experience to the fact-world which is constantly about me.'[42] Heidegger observes that man's relationship which the world is so absorbing and casts so much pressure on him that it is of his being-in-the world that he is cons-

38. Ibid.
39. Ibid., p. 300.
40. Ramakant Sinari : Reason in Existentialism, p. 41.
41. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p. 322,
42. Husserl, E. : Ideas, p. 104.

cious, much before he comprehends even himself.[43] There is no moment in my life when I can remain estranged from the world, or without it. And as Husserl puts it - "...when consciously awake, I find myself at all times, and without me ever being able to change this, set in relation to a world which, through its constant changes, remains one and I myself am a member of it."[44]

Professor Sinari remarks that one of the most controversial statements in Heidegger's writings that has invited severe criticism, especially from positivists, is "the nothing nothings itself". The proposition signifies that there is no source from which Nothingness issues forth; and far from dissipating itself to an absolute nullity, it makes itself felt through all that is.[45] "The essence of Nothing as original *nihilation*", says Heidegger, "lies in *this* : that *it alone* brings Dasein face to face with what—is as such."[46] When Nothingness is placed at the bottom of all that Dasein experiences, Dasein qua Dasein; with its natural potentialities, becomes the manifestation of Nothingness. Dasein means, says Heidegger, "being projected into Nothing". Outwardly it appears quite irrational to state that N othing exists by itself and is even prior to every form of negation. "...that not can only manifest itself", interprets Dr. Brock. "When its source... the nihilation of Nothing and hence itsef ... is drawn out of concealment. The Not does not come into being through negation, but negation is based on the Not, which derives from the nihilation of Nothing,"[47] Nihilation, therefore, for Heidegger, is neither the annihilation of what 'is', nor can it spring from particular negation. Nothing nihilates of itself. Heidegger's essay on What is Metaphysics ? would defiantly remark that logic is unable to say the last word on

43. Brock, W. : Existence and Being, pp. 45 ff.
44. Husserl, E. : Ideas, pp. 101-103.
45. Ramakant Sinari ; op. cit., p. 65.
46. Brock. W. : Existence and Being, p. 370.
47. Ibid., pp. 369-70.

the question of Nothing. "Has not the question remained", asks he, "running for the ages inspite of the various attempts of the philosophers, classical and modern, to establish or explain it away ?" "A certain feeling of Nothing", he goes on to say, "however vague it may be, always precedes and formulates the logical action of negation. This is why, Nothing is neither an object nor anything that 'is' at all. Nothing occurs neither by itself nor apart from what is, as a sort of adjunct. Nothing is that which makes the revelation of what—is as such possible for our human existence. Nothing nor merely provides the conceptual opposite of what is, but is also an original part of essence (Wesen). It is in the being of what—is that the nihilation of Nothing occurs (das Nishton dos Nihs)".[48]

Now, in the present perspective, it is an obvious fact that human nature fosters nothingness. "The character of man's being is essentially determined by what is *not*, his nothingness." The full connotation of Heidegger's emphasis on nothingness may be appreciated by listing the several kinds of negativity or nothingness in human nature[49] : (1) The existence of one man is separated from the existence of another (I am not you). (2) The existence of man is *not* essential (man can die at any time), (3) The existence of man is not complete even while he extsts (I am not what I can be). The kind of being (or existence) I am is an existence containing its negation (death) within it, (4) At the same time, I do *not* quite *know* that being that I am, but feel it. My self-concern, my awareness that I am, is not defined or transparent; it is not comprehensible. (5) Conscious or unconscious reflection is not a whole but it is a series of transcendings.

Being, Time and Historicity

The concept of Time and Historicity have been tackled seriously by Heidegger. He says : "Because existence is thrown

48. Ibid., pp. 370 ff.
49. Ralph Harper : Existentialism—A Theory of Man, p. 80,

into the world as a matter of fact, the nature of history, as the quiet power of the possible, becomes more revealingly exposed, the more concretely and particularly past being is understood in terms of future possibility." And again he explains : "The theme of history is concerned neither with that which happen only oral, nor with some generality which hovers over the facts, but with factually existent past possibility. Such possibility can never be related i. e., historically understood, authentically as long as it is turned into the paleness of model above time. Only factually authentic history, as resolute destiny, can so reveal past history that in the repetition the force of the possible will strikingly affect the way things are, that is, will be allowed to affect the future,"[50] and to have divided them by an unbridgeable gulf. "Husserl was primarily concerned with the analysis of a subject's relation to his perpetual and emotional world at a given time. For Heidegger, the subject's relation to the future was more crucial than his relation to the present."[51]

Apparantly, Heidegger is more concerned with the category of the possible than the actual. The human subject in Heidegger, appears above all as a free subject, capable of doing things and initiating changes in the world. Ultimately, one may see in Heidegger's writings "the existentialist desire to shock his readers out of their complacent and unthinking ways, out of their unawareness of Being. The missionary zeal of the true existentialist is nowhere more manifest than in him."[52] A majority of critics may feel some sympathy with Herbert Spiegelberg who concludes his chapter on Heidegger with these words : "Heidegger's obvious intent is to awaken and even to shake his reader into a realization of the phenomena has all too often defeated his own purpose. The squeezing and bending of existing words by liberating their meanings, whether etymologically

50. Heideeger : Being and Time, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinsn (London, 1967), p. 392.
51. Mary Warnock : Existentialism, p. 65.
52. Ibid., p. 70.

justified or not, without additional guidance to the reader by the way of definitions or examples, is apt to create a twilight of uncritical semi-understanding among the gullible, and of hostile misunderstanding among the more critical."[53]

Our histories are based on a distorted view of man's past. It is well-known fact that the traditional writers of history have rarely made an attempt to unveil the inner life of the human Dasein. The Schematization of the 'material' in history is made so extraneously that the 'potentialities of authentic existence' are either neglected or wrongly interpreted. The historians, therefore, speak of a past abstracted from the Dase-in–their 'heritage' and their 'fate'. "The 'Geschehen' (process of happening) which defines existence as historical", propounds Heidegger, "is originally hidden in the phenomenon of resolve which projects itself, in silence and in readiness for dread, into its own Being-guilty and which is authentic as 'running forward (in thought)' to potentialities of Being."[54] Professor Sinari comments that a soulless past has lost all the existentia-lities of human life; for it is just a series of incidents placed beside one another in some kind of reckonable other.[55] He further observes : "By authentic temporality is meant the 'history' of the world in which Dasein lives. It is a direct partaking of Dasein in the potentialities of Being."[56]

To be impartial on this point, one may agree with the modern critic when he comments : "What has so far been said about Being and Time is in a fundamental respect highly misleading for it would suggest that Being and Time is purely and simply a contribution to existentialism. But Heidegger has explicity denied that he is an existentialist."[57] "My philoso-

53. Herbert Spiegelberg : The Phenomenological Movement, Vol., I p, 351.

54. Heidegger : Being and Time, p. 110.

55. Ramakant Sinari : op. cit., p. 63.

56. Ibid., 63.

57. Passmore : Hundred Years of Philosophy, p. 483.

phical tendencies", he wrote in a letter to Jean Wahl, "cannot be classified as existentialist; the question which principally concerns me is not that of man's Existenz : it is Being in its totality and as such". That fact, indeed, is made perfectly clear at the very outset of *Being and Time*. Heidegger is well aware that the question "What is Being ?" has been denounced as senseless. Nietzsche, who is in Heidegger's eyes the culminating figure in Western metaphysics, had explicity maintained that Being is an empty idea—"the last cloudy streak of evaporating reality."[58] In his Introduction to Metaphysics, Heidegger hopefully tries to answer Nietzsche. Man cannot do without the conception of Being, according to Heidegger, without it he would be speechless. "There would, indeed, be no language at all" and in consequence to Human Existence, since man is essentially a language."[59]

Phenomenology of Existence

For Heidegger as for Husserl, philosophy is primarily a reading of phenomena, but beyond that it is for Heidegger "a universal ontology, starting out from a hermeneutics (i. e., an ontological analysis and interpretation) of man."[60] On the basis of sense experience and side by side with it, Husserl's philosophy aspired to a supra-empirical "intuition of essences" (Wesensschau). Heidegger applies Phenomenology and its methodological devices to a philosophy of existence which he wants to another, however, in a new "fundamental ontology."[61] The central question, therefore, of Heidegger's philosophy concerns not "existence" but "Being". "He has been accused of atheism, immoralism, anti-humanism, and outright nihilism,

58. Heidegger : Introduction to Metaphysics, 1953, English Trans. 1959.
59. Passmore : op. cit., p. 483.
60. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit (1927), 6th ed. (Tubingen : Neomarius Verlag, 1949), p. 37 f.
61. Kurt F. Reinhart : Existentialist Revolt, p. 129.

notwithstanding the fact that Heidegger has at various times convincingly refuted all those charges,[62] most recently in his revealing "Letter on Humanism."

Both for Husserl and the Heidegger phenomenology signifies a way back "to the things themselves". "To the things themselves" is the meaning implicit in the Greek combination of the word "phenomenology".[63] The word "phenomenology" reformulated in its original Greek form "legein to pheinomena"—means "to let that which show itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself"—(apophaineshai ta phainomena).[64] Phenomenology both for Heidegger and Husserl is thus "the standard method of philosophy"—("aie massgebende Methode der philosophie.)"[65] whereas for Husserl, the phenomenological reduction is the way back to "transcendental intentionality" or "transcendental ego", for Heidegger it is a way back to the ground of metaphysics, the event of the truth of Being-itself.[66] Phenomenology, for both Husserl and Heidegger is the method of "description" of "essences". To say "phenomenology is ' descriptive" is tautological.[67] The notion of "essences", however, is differently conceived in their thought. For Husserl the notion of "essences" is constituted by the apriori structures of "consciousness" which proceeds from the analytic of the *ego-cogito;* for Heidegger, the "essences" are the aprior structures of existence or being-in-the-world.[68]

Heidegger's "authentic phenomenology" rather than separating "essences" from "existence", puts the "essences" them-

62. Ibid., p. 131.
63. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p. 34.
64. C. M. Pathak : op. cit., p. 66.
65. Heidegger : Through Phenomenology to Thought, pp. xiv-xv.
66. Ibid., pp. xiv-xv.
67. Heidegger : Being and Time, p. 59.
68. C. M. Pathak : op. cit., p. 66.

selves back into "existence". Rather than "bracketing" the natural standard of everyday "being-in-the world", the phenomenological method here consists in "existential analysis" of evreyday structures of being and aims to "radicalize" the truth of Being, the essence itself to existence.[69] Merleau-Ponty aptly observes : "Far from being as has been thought, a procedure of idealistic philosophy, phenomenological reduction belongs to existential philosophy : Heidegger'a 'being-in-the world' appears only against the background of the phenomenological reduction."[70]

Truly speaking, man's existence in the middle of a multitude of vagaries of the changing situations is far from being wholly *his*.[71] As Heidegger says, it is basically the existence of an impersonal and natural tyrant, Das Man. "It is *he* and not *I*, who is the veritable subject of this worldly life...Das Man is the extremist form of existence-in-common."[72] "The fallen existence", Heidegger writies, "is by no means a non-being, but only a way of existence in which I am not really myself...It is certainly not devoid of possibilities, it is only a privation of my own possibilities."[73] Under its most archaic form, the sentiment of finding oneself 'there' arouses in man a sense that he is "thrown there" and abandoned to the fancies of the varying situation.[74] There is hardly any hope that we may overcome this fate completely. "So unfamiliar with life have we become", remarked Dostoevsky once, "that at times we feel for reality a positive loathing, and cannot bear to have it brought to our notice. Indeed, so far have we advan-

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69. Ibid., p. 66.
70. Merleau Ponty : Phenomenology of Perception : trans. by Colin Smith, (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970), Preface, p. xiv.
71. Ramakant Sinari : op. cit., p. 51.
72. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, pp. 118 ff.
73. Ibid., p. 178.
74. Ramakant Sinari : op. cit., p. 51.

ced as to look upon real life almost as a burden, a team of servitude."[75]

Heidegger on Authenticity

The term "authenticity" was introduced by Heidegger and was later taken over by Sartre. In the widest sense an authentic life is one based upon an accurate appraisal of human condition. Heidegger writies : "The being that exists is man. Man alone exists. Rocks are, but they do not exist. Trees are, but they do not exist. Horses are, but they do not exist. Angels are, but they do not exist. God is, but He does not exist".[76] And, of course, for both Heidegger and Sartre, it is the fact of consciousness which radically distinguishes man from other beings. "The existential nature of man is the reason why man can represent beings as such, and why he can be conscious of them."[77] Heidegger's goal is the possible restoration of man of an absolutely vital lost knowledge which will govern over future on this earth, and "give weight to the present", as well.[78] Meanwhile, Heidegger believes the ordinary man of to-day has lost his fundamental *raison ditre*. Man no longer knows the "why" of life or his world, and therefore the world is "darkening". "The essential episodes of this darkening are : the flight of the gods, the destruction of the earth, the standardization of man, the pre-eminence of the mediocre...Darkening of the world means emansculation of the spirit, the disintegration, wasting away, repression and mis-interpretation of the spirit."[79]

75. Dostoevsky, Fiodor : Notes From Underground.
76. Heidegger : "The Way back into the ground of Metaphysics", trans. Walter Kaufmann. Published in Walter Kaufmann, ed. Existentialism from Dostoevsky, to Sartre (New York : Meridian Books, Inc., 1956), p. 215.
77. Ibid.. p. 215.
78. Rhodo P. Le Cocq : The Radical Thinkers—Heidegger and Shri Aurobindo, p. 23.
79. Heidegger : Au Introduction to Metaphysics, op. cit., p. 37.

John Wild, in an article, "Authentic Existence", expands on the method and steps in the process of transcendence. He finds nine stages, which are here merely summarised.[80] First, a man feels general dissatisfaction with the role his culture imposes upon him; then he visualises general abstract possibilities leading him away from that destined way of life, and he becomes restless. Step four, he is crucified, for this restlessness of "conflict" as Heidegger and Heraclitus would call it. If the tension is maintained, the self-dialogue continues and the possibility becomes clearer and more individually meaningful. At this stage, tension develops between the old way of life and the new, the latter now attracting and repelling him, while, what Heidegger calls *angst*, develops. Again, if this tension is sustained, specific action becomes clearer. But if it continues, the isolated individual act must now be seen in terms of "global meaning". The man begins "a new way of life in a new world of meaning, the becoming of a self that can be called his own."[81]

Transformation of Values

Writing of the true significance of Heidegger's philosophy, De Waelhens comes to the heart of the matter in these words : "If up to now all values have appeared to humanity as linked to God, the dismissal of God threatens to cause a collapse of values which will throw a man into a sink-hole of anarchy. This is why the affirmation of the death of God must go hand in hand with an effort to transform values, with the pretension of endowing them with a sense which in the older philosophy, then appeared to derive only from God."[82] In a letter to Jean Beau-

80. Rhodo P. Le Cocq : op. cit., p. 27.
81. John Wild : "Authentic Existence", An Invitation to Phenomenology, Ed. James M. Edie, (Chicago : Quadrangle Books, 1965), pp. 69-71.
82. De Waelhen : The Philosophy of Martin Heidegger, p. 354. Quoted in the Meaning of Heidegger by Thomas Langan, p. 105.

fret (Brief uber dem Humanismus, 1946), Heidegger offers some richer indications how this transformation must take place : "(We must) turn back into the rear of that installed himself in subjectivity, is harder and more dangerous than the ascent. The descent leads into the poverty of the *Ek-sistenz* of the *homo humanus*. In the Ek-sistenz, the circle of the *homo* animals of metaphysics is left behind."[83] In this context, Heidegger suggests that the metaphysical nature of man, conceived as *homo animalis*, must be replaced by the conception of man as *humo humanus*. The way to the passage very obviously lies in the notion of a descent (Abstaig) into the poverty (Arment) of humanity.[84] Heidegger's thought is neither directly anti-god nor in the least theist. "This philosophy", Heidegger writes Jean Beaufret, "distinguishes itself neither for nor against the Dasein of God. It remains ensconced in indifference. Thus the religious question is to it "all the same". Nihilism does not achieve such an indifferentism."[85] In a letter to Beaufret, Heidegger explains carefully that the "indifference" which he tried to achieve is not an end in itself, an "indifferentism", but rather serves as a step on the road to a more positive goal.[86] The question of God, he states here explicitly, cannot even be raised until the "dimension of the Holy, which as dimension remains closed to us, is reopened and the illumination of Being is rediscovered."[87]

Existential Theology of Heidegger

Man as existing is an individual and defines classification.[88] This is a point on which existentialism does justice to the

83. Heidegger : Letter to Jean Beaufret (Brief uber dem Humanismus, 1946), Holzwerge, p. 37.
84. Thomas Langan : The Meaning of Heidegger, p. 206.
85. Heidegger : Humanismus brief, p. 36.
86. Ibid., p. 36.
87. Ibid., p. 37.
88. John Macquarrie : An Existential Theology, p. 33. (A Comparison of Heidegger and Bultmann), ScM Press Ltd., 56 Bloomsherg Street, London, 1960.

Biblical understanding of man as individual creatures of the Father.[89] Of course, this is not to deny value to the social sciences. But it is to indicate their severe limitations. We read, for instance, that, "loose thinking and prejudice are extremely prevalent in matters of politics, economics, religion, crime are the like...Yet the social sciences, such as psychology and sociology are endeavouring to study these subjects rationally and impartially, in the same manner as the physicist studies the atom, or the physiologist the workings of the body.[90] "The existential analysis consists in the descriptive analysis of that which is revealed to Dasein in his own self-disclosure as existing.[91] On the subject of relation of phenomenology to theology, Tillich claims thus : "...theology must apply the phenomenological approach to all its basic concepts, forcing its critics first of all to see what the criticized concepts mean, and also forcing itself to make careful descriptions of its concepts and to use them with logical consistency, thus avoiding the danger of trying to fill in logical gaps with devotional material. The test of a phenomenology is that the picture given by it is convincing, that it can be seen by anyone who is willing to look in the same direction, that the description illuminates other related ideas, and that it makes the reality which these ideas are supposed to reflect understandable."[92] Heidegger's view at this point could almost be expressed in Johannine terminology of saying that man is in the world but not of the world.[93] Man is always in the world, but in his intimate concern with the world, claims Heidegger, "Dasein can lose himself to the being that meets him in the world, and be taken over by it "[94] He exists authentically when, instead of

89. Cf. Matt. 10-22-31.

90. Vermon : Tne Measurement.of Abilities, University, London, Pref. pp. v-vi.

91. John Macquarrie : The Existential Theology, p. 35.

92. Paul Tillich : Systematic Theology, Nisbet, I, p, 118.

93. John. 17. 15-16.

94. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p. 76.

being enslaved to the world, he is free for his world, in Heidegger's phrase.

The World

The complete existential concept of the world has two sides to it[95] : (a) The world is an instrumental system, a worship, to be understood in relation to men's practical concern (b) The world is a threat to man's authentic existence, in so far as he can lose himself in it, and conceal from himself the difference between his own being and the being of what is within the world. Man not only is, but also open to or disclosed to himself in his being. This disclosure, which is a fundamental structure of existence, Heidegger identifies with the traditional doctrine of a 'light of nature'.[96] The self and the world are given together. "Truth in the most original sense is the disclosure of Dasein, to which belongs the discovery of nature"'[97] Here, a question naturally arises : Is it true to say that Heidegger's philosopoy is atheistic ? He himself says that it is not, and is said to have defined his position as that "he does not deny the existence of God, but affirms his absence."[98] Heidegger considers deeply that original knowledge has been so overlaid, trivialized and stultified by the deadening hand of tradition and dogmatism that God is now absent.[99] So it has happened with the quest for being in philosophy : "The dominance of tradition makes what it 'hands down' inaccessible and more than ever concealed. What is handed down is taken as self-evident, and the way to the original sources is lost."[100] Heidegger's affirmation of the absence of God would be very

95. John Macquarrie : The Existential Theology, p. 50.
96. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p. 133.
97. Ibid,, p. 223.
98. Quoted by Troisfontaines : Existentialism and Christian Thought, Dacre, p. 48.
99. John Macquarrie : The Existential Theology, p. 72.
100. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p. 21.

much like Nietzsche's assertion that God is dead.[101] Monier interprets this as meaning that Nietzsche proclaimed the death of God "to the men who, even after having been responsible for it, dared not accept it as a fact."[102] There are obvious resemblances as well as difference between Heidegger and Nietzsche. But just as Zarathustra, having broken the old tables of values, proceeds to create new ones, so it might be claimed that Heidegger, having affirmed the absence of God, proceeds to look for Him afresh. He speaks somewhat contemptuously of "the remnants of Christian theology which have not yet been expelled from philosophical thought",[103] yet his own original search for being is also a return to the quest for God. Blackham says of Heidegger: "His philosophy takes shape as the historical quest for being, and is seen to be essentially religious."[104] Copleston concurs : "His philosophy is, in a sense, a seeking for God."[105]

Fallenness

Man's fallenness has two-fold aspects[106] : It is first a fall into the world, out of which he tries to understand himself. This appears to be primarily the flight from facticity. Brunner has argued that it is not technology which has produced the problems of modern civilization, but rather modern civilization which has created for itself the problem of an uncontrolled technology.[107] Man's intense pre-occupation with the world of things, he believes, is simply the expression of his delusion that he can solve the problems of his existence by the mastery of

101. Nietzsche : Thus Spake Zarathustra, p. 5.
102. Monier : Existential Philosophies, Rockliff, p. 5.
103. Heidegger : Sein und Zeit, p. 230.
104. Blackham : Six Existential Thinkers, Routledge, p. 103.
105. Copleston : Existentialism and Modern Man, Blackfriars, p. 18.
106. John Macquarrie : The Existential Theology, p. 101.
107. Brunner : Christianity and Civilization, Nisbet, Vol. 2, Lect. I.

things, or, expressed in Biblical language, his reaction to the temptation, "ye shall be as gods".[108] Fallenness is secondly a fall into collectivism, in which the individual surrenders his will to the depersonalized mass, and follows the crowd. This appears to be primarily the flight from possibility, so far as that means responsibility.[109] Heidegger's phenomenological analysis of fallenness yields three important structures. The first is temptation (Versuchung). The second is contentment (Beruthigung). Finally, there is a structure of alienation (Entfremdung). As fallen, man is cut off from his true self and from his authentic possibilities.[110]

Care

This comprehensive concept unifies three of the fundamental characteristics of existence.[111] The first is *possibility*. Man is always ahead of himself, incomplete in his being. He stands before a 'not-yet', he projects possibility. The second is *facticity*. Man exists as a fact, and his possibility is always tied down to his facticity. He is thrown into a situation. The third is *fallenness*. Man is fallen into the world in his practical concern with it. These three structures of the being of man constitute care (sorge). It is that structure of his being in virtue of which 'he looks before and after' and at the same time is concerned with his world. Brunner is surely right in saying of Heidegger's attempt to find a meaning for life and of variation, that they present us with "a philosophy of despair, hidden in a number of more or less subtle evasions of the problem (of meaning)."[112] The Christian alternative, therefore, is characterised by hope, while that offered by atheistic existentialism sticks in despair."[113]

108. Gen. 3. 5.
109. John Macquarrie : The Existential Theology, p. 101.
110. Ibid., p. 102.
111. Ibid., p. 112.
112. Brunner : op. cit., Vol. I, p. 73.
113. John Macquarrie : The Existential Theology, p. 127.

A Critical Estimate

The individual Dasein in its many dimensional activities has been elaborately and successfully discussed by Heidegger, but unlike Jaspers, he does not attempt to say courageously and satisfactorily about the life of communities, about the constitution of traditions and institutions. His concept of freedom suffers limitation. It lacks social, political and economic spheres.[114] A thoughtful comment of a modern critic of existentialism, pertaining to the destiny of man, as conceived by Heidegger, is worth-mentioning. "Existentialism in the writings of Heidegger returns to the Greek wisdom of perceiving being as having limitless horizons and contours. His originality springs from his very idea of Nothingness. While in Kierkegaard one feels that human destiny is safe in the hands of God, in Heidegger one touches the absolute that is far above God and thence returns with a devouring emptiness, since what one eternally longed for is not *there* at all. Heidegger's existentialism is the philosophy of man's unmitigated desire to be nothingness itself."[115]

The whole description of how authentic existence is established, we are once more conscious of the Christian roots of Heidegger's thinking. Though he repeatedly assures that "he does not mean by terms like conscience and guilt what the theologian means by them, yet the final outcome is reminiscent rather of Buddhism than Christianity. The man he envisages as free and authentic has some features of the Arhänt. He is his own saviour."[116]

"Therefore, O Anand ! Be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourselves to no external refuge. Hold fast to the Truth as a lamp. Hold fast as a refuge to the

114. Margarett Chatterji : The Existentialist Outlook, p. 144.
115. Ramakant Sinari : op. cit., p. 37.
116. Allen, Edger Leonard : Existentialism from Within, p. 39. London, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

Truth. Look not for refuge to any one beside yourselves."[117]

Roughly, four types of critical views may be discerned against his concept of man[118] :—

(i) He diagnoses man's condition as fallen and describes how the sense of guilt leads on to salvation, but God himself does not enter the process at any point. If the human predicament is as he describes it, then—so Kierkegaard would say—one has no right to spend time over analysing its structure—one should do something about it. Action is sure remedy.

(ii) His description of human life is one-sided and lopsided—what he has actually done is to isolate certain aspects of human life. He has in view not man in general, but man in urban society as we face presently in the west, surrounded by a mechanized environment. Attention is not focussed on the graces that adorn daily life. We come across a caricature of daily life instead of a real portrait.

(iii) The distinction between inauthentic and authentic existence is not clear-cut but vague. Throughout his writings, the devastating horror of death ceaselessly disheartens man and especially at this point Sartre does not follow Heidegger. It is an open fact that death for man is something more than the break-up of the biological organism. Man can anticipate his death as the animal cannot. Man dies as guilt, as one who has neglected opportunities.

(iv) The over-emphasis on death is accompanied by a striking indifference to birth. Life is intimately bound up with love. There seems to be nothing in the world as Heidegger sees it that can be termed sacred.

Professor Margarett Chatterji comments that in man's everyday existence he encounters not only things but his fellow-

117. Rhys David : Dialogues of the Buddha (1910), Part II, 108.

I18. Allen, Edger Leonard : Existentialism from Within, pp. 39-44.

beings. Like Kierkegaard, Heidegger is struck by the anonymity of our day-to-day dealings with others.[119] We are already acquainted with the possibility of being genuinely with the other. But unlike Marcel and Jaspers, Heidegger does not show the least interest in exploring these possibilities. "Schopenhaur distinguishes two philosophic types : those who were made philosophers by philosophy and those who were made philosophers by life. Heidegger represents the first type. His works seem curiously divorced from our everyday concerns. His thinking is not so much a thinking about life as a thinking about thinking."[120]

119. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 196.
120. Ibid.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Gabriel Marcel

Man : The Victor Against Nature

"The characteristic feature" of our age, Marcel thinks, is "the man in whom the sense of the ontological...the sense of Being...is lacking, or, to speak more correctly...he is the man who has lost the awareness of this sense."[1] Thus, his philosophical inquiry begins with the experience of the individual's "being-in-the-world". My "being-in-the-world"[2] and in history particularises and limits me. "The problem of the reality of the external world", writes Marcel, "was among those philosophic problems which posed themselves for me with a frightening actuality...I believe I have never accorded any interest to that extreme form of idealism which denies this kind of reality."[3]

In the religious quest the individual constitutes himself as a person by affirming the infinite personality of God. Faith is the meeting point of two freedoms : the free appeal of God and the free response and homage of man. "I now understand my situation in the world by relating it to the creative will of God. I realize my engagement in history by becoming aware of my divine vocation."[4] So far as the human situation is concerned, Marcel differs from Sartre. "Whereas for Sartre the human situation threatened, hemmed in all, potentially frustrated and annihilated by the pressures and projects of "the others"—

1. Gabriel Marcel : The Philosophy of Existence, tr. Manya Harari 1950, p. 1.
2. Kurt F. Reinhart : Existentialist Revolt, p. 207.
3. Gabriel Marcel : Regard en Arriere (the bibliographies in Existentialisme Chretien, Paris : Plon, 1947) p. 308.
4. Gabriel Marcel : Journal Metaphysique, p. 41.

begets la nausee, for Marcel the free acceptance of this same human situation becomes the source of religious humility. And like Jaspers, Marcel finds in the "tension" which exists between human freedom and the limitations imposed by the human situation the way to "transcendence".[5] Perhaps, this is the reason why Marcel has chosen the saying of Hugh of St. Viator, the medieval mystic, "To raise oneself to God is to enter into oneself, and not only that but in the depth of the self to transcend oneself",[6] as a basis to propound his thought.

Marcel wrote *Homo Viator*, and other articles to encourage French people to rediscover their true dignity as human beings. He felt spiritual decadence which had recurred in France and other countries. He suggested to have a recovery of human character which is to be recovered not so much through passive obedience as through faithfulness which Marcel defines as "the particle of creation which is in me, the gift which has been granted to me for all eternity, to participate in the universal drama, to work for example, to humanize the earth, or contrarily to make it more uninhabitable."[7]

Marcel warns that the atmosphere of the present age may well lead one to an absolute despair or to an eschatogical consciousness. The non-Christian Existentialists share this belief. The all-devouring atom bomb is a symbol of man's ability to destroy himself and his kind completely. What will the future hold ? "Without there being any question of prophesying or of simply giving way to a fatalism which, for my past, I consider unlawful and culpable, we must admit the extreme possibility that we are heading for catastrophes even more terrible, even more uprooting, than those which many of us have witnessed during the last thirty-five years."[8]

5. Kurt F. Reinhart : Existentialist Revolt, p. 209.
6. Quoted in Existentialist Revolt, p, 209.
7. Gabriel Marcel : Homo Viator, p. 182 (written in 1942).
8. Gabriel Marcel : The Mystery of Being, Part II, p. 166.

Being : As Absolute Plenitude

Marcel has successfully discussed the concept of 'being' in '*Tragic Wisdom and Beyond*', the being which he designates as plenitude, pleroma, even "absolute super-being"—and further he says "most genuinely being..."[9] Accordingly, the best approach to this sense of being is through man's ontological exigency, the exigency for being. This exigency is not, he claims, simply a desire or vague aspiration, it is "a deep rooted interior urge", even an "appeal", for being. He characterizes this exigency as an urge, "...an exhaustive analysis bearing on the data of experience and aiming to reduce them step by step to elements increasingly devoid of intrinsic or significant values."[10] Being stands firm against the tests and trials of life. Obviously being has close association with intrinsic value, (that is, value not simply due to man's choices), values which when experienced announce that everything cannot be "...reduced to a play of successive appearances which are inconsistent with each other or in the words of Shakespeare, to "a tale told by an idiot."[11]

Marcel has pointed out minute distinction between having and being, attaching deeper significance to 'Being' than to 'Having'. Having implies possession which is a burden and impediment. Being means freedom from encumbrance. Marcel conceives the ideal of releasing oneself from the encumbrance of all possessions at the time of death, and preparing oneself for entrance into life eternal. Death does not mean for him sinking into a void but rather a step towards eternity."[12] As a spiritual thinker, "Marcel transcends historical determinism on the level of the mysteries of personal being. Sartre rebels against it in a spirit akin to Kierkegaard. In the name of a

9. Gabriel Marcel : Tragic Wisdom and Beyond, p. 53.
10. Gabriel Marcel : The Philosophy of Existence, p. 15.
11. Ibid., p. 14.
12. Ras Bihari Das, History of Philosophy : Eastern and Western, Vol. II, p. 437.

free conscious existence which can say "no" to any force which threatens to overwhelm it, Sartre affirms free existence in the present. Though one may be determined in part by one's past, yet the free consciousness can always reject its past in the present, with the intent of imposing a new project on the future."[13] Human consciousness, equipped with a realisation of its possibilities in the present, is in revolt against its past. This is why, Mathieu in the 'Age of Reason' breaks a 3000 year-old vase and afterwards thinks : "I did it, and I felt quite proud, freed from the world, without lies or kin or origins, a stubborn little excrescence that had burst the terrestrial crust."

Access to Being : Fidelity, Hope, Love

Marcel takes great care in analysing the concept of fidelity, hope and love. They are for him the looked—for "concrete approaches" to the ontological mystery. He likes to listen to the "ontological call" incarnate in these attitudes.[14] The recurrent note of his entire work is participation, but the nature of this participation is that of an existing self. The self participates in being and can only pursue being by an ever-deepening participation (love, fidelity, hope)[15] in it. But this is an option : "It is only a free being that can resist the sort of bias which tends to drag it in the direction of the thing, towards the morality which is inherent in the thing."[16] We find that in his theistic observation the appeal to being which issues from the "I exist", is answered by an "I believe". Human existence is always trapped and human freedom stifled within the limited perspective of any "to have."[17] "By this term

13. Kington Fredrick Temple : French Existentialism, a Christian Critique (Toronto, The University Press, 1961), p. 38.
14. Kurt, F. Reinhart : Existentialits Revolt, p. 218.
15. Journal of Philosophy To-day—April 1975.
16. Gabriel Marcel : The Mystery of Being, Vol. II, p. 33.
17. Kurt, F. Reinhart : op. cit, p. 220.

"to have'," writes Marcel, "I mean not exclusively visible possessions...but also ingrained habits—both good and bad-opinions, prejudices, which make us impervious to the breath of the spirit, in short, everything which paralyses in us what the Apostle calls the freedom of the children of God."[18]

A note in the Metaphysical Journal under the date of March 6, 1919 tells : "Take care not to confound 'to be' with 'to exist'." When he discusses being it is "that which does not frustrate our expectation; there is being from the moment at which our expectation is fulfilled."[19] Being within the context of our expectation, appears as "fullness" in contrast to nihilism and reductionism. The "exigence" for being holds prominent in his essay, "On the Ontological Mystery" (1933) and his Gifford Lectures, The Mystery of Being (1949-50). Of course, this ontological exigence should not be understood after the manner of self-interest of self-development, since, for Marcel, the person is characterized by openness and participation : "A grip on being is only possible for us when we suddenly break through the enclosing shell which we have grown around ourselves."[20] The exigence of person Marcel refers to being-as-fullness as "the Pleroma which is Being" or the "symphony of Being".[21]

In the literature of Marcel, the realm of being is the realm of value. The two conceptions are only artificially divorced. "One thing now seems reasonably clear : being cannot, it is certain, be in indifferent to value : it could only be so if one were to identify it as a crude datum considered as existing in its own right, and that we are not justified in doing."[22] In other words, it is impossible to give meaning to the experience of being apart from the experience of value. "For what we call

18. Gabriel Marcel : Homo Viator, p. 128.
19. Metaphysical Journal, p. 179.
20. Gabriel Marcel : Being and Having, p. 113.
21. Ibid.
22. Gabriel Marcel : The Mystery of Being, Vol. II, p. 44.

values are perhaps only a kind of refraction of reality, like the rainbow colours that emerge from a prism when white light is passed through it."[23] It is beyond doubt that being can only mean transcendence. If there is fullness, it must be experienced. Marcel says in so many words that "the exigence of being coincides with the exigence of transcendence."[24] Along with this the role of values emerges. In case, if we regard them as the heralds of being, they are heralds and transcendence too. "Sartre, to the contrary, notwithstanding, a value is just what will not allow itself to be chosen." As Marcel says, a value takes an incommensurable for granted.[25]

Marcel explains that the existence is "effective presence". "Presence can only be involved or evoked. It cannot be possessed. Only a person, moreover, can withhold his presence."[26] In the 'Metaphysical Journal' he writes : "...there is infinite value in the fact of feeling another to be present, and infinite value in contact as such." It is presence which establishes the connection between existence and value. Presence is " a kind of influx". Marcel's theistic approach towards life has been revealed in "Etre et Avoir". "God can be given to me only as an Absolute Presence in the act of worship, and any idea which I form of Him is merely an abstract expression or an intellectualisation of this Presence".[27] Fidelity can be to oneself, to others, or to God, all the three, in Marcel's thinking are interlinked.[28] Fidelity is, he says, the most important of the ways in which I and Thou belong. Fidelity expresses "ontological permanence". Fidelity is the "perpetuation of a witness". In its wider sense, hope and despair, however, are corelated. It is only in a world where despair is possible that

23. Gabriel Marcel : Man Against Mass Society, p. 122.
24. Gabriel Marcel : Mystery of Being, Vol. II, p. 128.
25. Gabriel Marcel : L 'homme problematique.
26. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit, p. 81.
27. Gabriel Marcel : Ete et Avoir, p. 284.
28. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 81.

there can be possibility of conquering hope. "The truth is that there can, strictly speaking, be no hope except when the temptation to despair exists. Hope is the act by which this temptation is actively or victoriously overcome."[29]

Hope is a recurring theme in the works of Marcel which can meet the challenge of death. The Christian has the hope of eternal life, a hope founded on a promise.[30] This is why, he says that hope is "essentially the availability of a soul which has entered intimately enough into the experience of communion to accomplish in the teeth of will and knowledge the transcendent act."[31] Despair is connected with isolation, hope and the bonds of communion.

Love is the third and the greatest of the fruits of the spirit according to St Paul. "Marcel's understanding of the bonds of love owes much to the New Testament idea of bonds of fellowship, of being members one of another. His treatment of intersubjectivity brings about a convergence of *agape* (charity in its Biblical sense) and philia (attachment)."[32] In 'Man and Humanity'[33], he maintains that "each of us has a duty to multiply as much as possible arround him the bonds between being and being..." Love is "real knowledge"; in that "love posits the beloved as transcending all explanation and all reduction."[34] It is love through which we actually participate in Being. In "The Metaphysical Journal" the same thought is expressed like this, "...to love someone truly is to love in God".[35] The 'Metaphysical Journal' is full of insights into the connection between human and Divine love. As for Buber, so far Marcel too, the Divine "Thou" and the human "Thou" are, as it were, avenues

29. Gabriel Marcel : Homo Viator, p. 36.
30. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 81.
31. Gabriel Marcel : Vide Homo Viator, p. 67.
32. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 85.
33. Gabriel Marcel : Man And Humanity, p. 155.
34. Gabriel Marcel : Metaphysical Journal, p. 62.
35. Ibid., p. 158.

to each other. The object of love, paradoxically, admits of no objectification. I do not love "because of...". Loving and suffering are deeply related, and this is the inner meaning of *agape*, the descending movement of love.[36] At the human level, Marcel says. love is born through; "a sort of preliminary disarticulation of myself and it is for this reason that to love is in a sense inevitably to suffer."[37] In the same tune, freedom, Marcel understands as linked to transcendence. In 'Man Against Humanity', he explains, "...a man cannot be free or remain free, except in the degree to which he remains linked with what transcends him, whatever the particular form of the link may be'.[38]

Problem and Mystery of Being

Marcel holds that union of body and soul, the phenomena of evil, of love, of freedom—they all pose no problems : they are mysteries. They "envelop' me; I am enclosed in them. It is equally improper, according to Marcel, to speak of the "problem of being"; there is only a "mystery of being".[39] The meta-problematic mystery is indubitably real, although its reality cannot be proven, because it transcends both objective thought and empirical consciousness. Consequently, it appeals strongly to the spontaneity of human freedom : "This philosophic reflection functions only in virtue and for the sake of freedom...The very idea of constraint is void of all possible meaning in this sphere...I can freely choose the absurd because I may easily persuade myself that it is not absurd, or because I may even give preference to it precisely because it is absurd."[40]

The real subject is a free subject. "It is undoubtedly necessary", writes Marcel, "to renounce once and for all the naively

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36. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 85.
37. Gabriel Marcel : Metaphysical Journal, p. 234.
38. Gabriel Marcel : Man Against Humanity, p. 16.
39. Kurt. F. Reinhart : op. cit., p. 215.
40. Gabriel Marcel : Du Refus a l Invocation, p. 35.

rationalistic idea of a system of affirmation valid for 'thought in general' or for any consciousness whatsoever...The ontological order can only be recognised personally by the totality of a being engaged in a drama which is his own, while at the same time it surpasses him infinitely in every sense—a being to whom has been imparted the unique power of affirming himself or negating himself, depending on whether he affirms being and opens himself to it—or negates being and thereby closes himself to it; in this dilemma resides the very essence of human freedom."[41] In the "Logic of Freedom", says Marcel, objective knowledge also has its place, but only as an initial phase in an "ascending dialectic." Objective knowledge is neither definite nor total knowledge. In order to remain loyal to itself it must transcend itself and give way to "the ontological mystery. Adopting the method and terminology of "negative theology," Marcel states that first, this knowledge must be negative. Secondly, it must be concrete. Further, "Being" says Marcel, "is a sort of ontological permanence, to which we are linked and owing to whose endurance we ourselves endure; it is a permanence which implies or demands a history; it is definitely not the inert or formal permanence of an abstractly valid law".[42]

A genuine question arises as to how we can be sure that mystery is not an illusion, if there is no way of verifying it ? Marcel holds that only one answer to such an inquiry is 'participation'. But Marcel's whole point is that this is a meaningless approach in the reign of mystery. Therefore, he says : "My answer is categorical : To think, or rather, to assert the meta-problematical is to assert it as indubitably real, as a thing of which I cannot doubt without falling into contradiction. We are in a sphere where it is no longer possible to dissociate the idea itself from the certainty or the degree of certainty which pertains to it. Because this idea is certainty, it is the assurance of itself; it is, in this sense, something other

41. Gabriel Marcel : Etre et Avoir, p. 174. f.

42. Ibid., p. 173. f.

and something more than an idea."[43] Further, he adds that the realisation that my being is somehow situated before and beyond my life begins with it a second realization : "My being is something which is in jeopardy from the moment my life begins, and must be saved."[44] My being is at stake in my life. In other words, it is the sole meaning of my life : Marcel may well quote with approval the words of Keats, "the world is a vale of soul-making,"[45] since the principal meaning he himself gives to the soul is based on a similar view. The concept of the soul as "form" has no attraction for him because a form is everlastingly safe—nothing can threaten it.[46]

The sum and substance of Marcel's thought on this matter may be put in this way : in my life I am a carrier of more than my life. "My being" is the transcendental dimension of my life. This is reiterated in various ways : "Human living," he will say, seems "essentially the living of something other than itself."[47] The distinction between problem and mystery has some resemblance to the Bergsonian polarity of intellect and intuition.[48] "A problem", says Marcel, "is something which one hits upon, something, which blocks one's way. It is wholly 'in front of me' (devant noi). A mystery, on the contrary, is something in which I find myself engaged, whose essence it is consequently not to be wholly 'in front of me'. It seems that in this realm (of mystery) the distinction between the 'within myself' (l'en moi) and the 'in front of myself (le devant moi) loses all significance."[49] Thus, being for Marcel is mystery par excellence. Marcel suggests that if Being is not an object, then the question of 'knowing' it does not arise. Being is "what

43. Gabriel Marcel : The Philosophy of Existence, pp. 11-12.
44. Gabriel Marcel : Being and Having, p. 199.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid., p. 25.
47. Ibid., (I), p. 171.
48. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 81.
49. Gabriel Marcel : Ete et Avoir, p. 145.

withstands analysis."[50] None can enquire as to what it is, because it is an experience of transcendence which is a presence, not a substance or an object. Being is "the principle of inexhaustibility."[51]

Participation

Ultimately, existence is identified with participation, and 'esse' with 'co-esse'. My experience arises in communication with that of other persons.[52] "A complete and concrete knowledge of oneself cannot be self-centred; however paradoxical it may seem, I should prefer to say that it must be centred in others. We can understand ourselves by starting from the other, or from others, and only by starting from them...Fundamentally, I have no reason to set any particular store by myself, except in so far as I know that I am loved by other beings who are loved by me."[53] Marcel goes ahead with the current of his thought. "From the intensity of the inner life, he turns to the purity of the spiritual life. He is not one condemned to freedom, but one who yearns to become a truly free person."[54] Thus Paul Ricoueur distinguishes Marcel's approach to freedom from that of Sartre. "When all the other existentialists emphasise the power of existing by freedom, one is struck with the care which arouses G. Marcel not to confine himself in the avarice of the "I myself"; what interests G. Marcel is not the moment of self-assertion of freedom but the moment of participation."[55] Marcel's thought is full of the virtues by which one participates in the world of Being.

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50. Vide, The Philosophy of Existence.
51. Margarett Chatterji : The Existentialist Outlook, p. 81.
52. F. H. Heinemann : Existentialism and the Modern Predicament, p. 146.
53. Gabriel Marcel : The Mystery of Being, Vol. II, p. 8.
54. Kington F. Temple : French Existentialism—A Christian Critique, op. cit., p. 156.
55. Paul Ricoeur, Gabriel Marcel et Karl Jaspers, p. 26.

Inspite of the parallel beliefs in creativity in virtue, Sartre and Marcel differ on certain points. In Sartre, the free and self-conscious man creates his own values out of his nothingness. Marcel also affirms that the self must be a creator and, as a creator, it is free. "It is creator, however humble the level may be where this creation is accomplished, that a man whoever he may be, can recognise that he is free."[56] An existentialist critic remarks, "Marcel sees a great fault in much of modern thought in separating man from life. That is basically Sartre's fault in discussing the impossibility of sincerity which, if it were true, would destroy all possibility of validity in his philosophical writings. Values are not to be treated purely objectively since they exist in and out of the self and it is into a world of value that the self is born. Marcel repudiates Sartre's individual choice of value and regards it as a basic sign of the insufficiency in his ontology."[57] Marcel himself elucidates the point thus, "It is only too clear that a system of measures is essentially relative since it is the object of an initial choice. But contrary to what Sartre has imagined, for example—and that is, without doubt, one of the most serious errors of his philosophy and one with the most weighty consequences—what we call value is essentially something that does not allow itself to be chosen."[58] A clear difference in respect of values may be seen between Sartre and Marcel. For Sartre, the basis of all value is the nothingness in man's being, which is his self-consciousness or his freedom. Marcel, in his article concerning "L' Existence et la liberate humanine Chez J. P. Sartre"[59] quotes Sartre's *'Being and Nothingness'*. In contrast to this, Marcel writies : "I seem not to be choosing my values but to be recognising them."[60]

56. Gabriel Marcel : Les Hommes Contre l' humain, p. 24.
57. Kington F. Temple : op. cit. p. 157.
58. Gabriel Marcel : Les Hommes Contre l' humain, p. 128.
59. Gabriel Marcel : L' Existence et la liberate humanine Chez J. P. Sartre, p. 166; quoted in Kington F. Temple, op. cit , p. 160.
60. Ibid., p. 166.

The non-Christian existentialists regard courage as one of the greatest virtues. They venture to do it because of their over emphasis on contingency. Marcel notes that courage is perhaps the only bourgeois virtue which they accept.[61] In support of their thesis, the non-existentialists argue that during the last twenty years, man has attained a degree of boldness and courage which has never been reached before. "The saints of the church and the communist revolutionaries were not true heroes because they sought assurance that their efforts were already achieved in heaven or in history."[62] We come across a unique change. "The contemporary hero is not Lucifer, it is not even Prometheus, it is man."[63]

The Problem of Man's Incarnation

Marcel conceives of the relationship between body and self, self and God, person and the universe in wide perspective. To explain this relationship, Marcel makes use of the term "incarnation" : as I am incarnate in my body, so the world is incarnate in me, and God is incarnate in the world, manifesting Himself by means of sensible signs, symbols and vestiges (Jasper's "ciphers"). To conceive of God, Marcel claims, would amount to a denial of His very essence, for the "living" (le Dieu vivant) is an "incarnate" God, who is present *per essentian* in myself and in all things.[64] The Christian existence rests on supra-temporal and absolute foundation. The mystery of my "incarnation" is illumined in the act of faith which "fills the void, which exists between my empirical and my thinking self, in the affirmation of their transcendent union."[65] Whereas for Sartre man is 'thrown' into a hostile world and abandoned to his devices and projects, for Marcel, man as an "incarnate" being in "incarnate" world, is not left to realize his destiny

61. Gabriel Marcel : L' Existence et la liberte, p. 128.
62. Kington F. Temple : op. cit., p. 160.
63. M. Merleau—Ponty : Sens et non-sens, p. 380.
64. Kurt F. Reinhart : op. cit, p. 210.
65. Quoted in Existentialist Revolt, p. 210.

in absolute solitude.[66] His voyage through time and history is illumined by certain "values", which are not his own making but are themselves "incarnate" in "being". "Value denotes the seizure of being by the human intellect," says Marcel. "Value can only be safeguarded where being is safeguarded as a mystery of which I partake for the moment I begin to exist.[67] Marcel has attached greater significance to human existence by introducing 'incarnate value'. "In the light of the incarnate value, being is encountered, revealing itself in its enduring quality and appealing like Jasper's "ciphers", to a creative interpretation on the part of man."[68]

A highly developed concept of philosophy in Marcel is his view of man as a traveller. Man is not, however, a traveller in an alien world. Marcel never felt the existence of the external world as an illusion. He writes : "The problem of the reality of the external world was among those philosophic problems which posed themselves for me with a frightening actuality... I believe I have never accorded any interest to that extreme form of idealism which denies this kind of reality."[69] Marcel makes use of the concept of incarnation, a Christian concept used to elucidate the nature of the being who is both Son of man and Son of God. If I am incarnate in my body, so also in the world, the world being His creation. Life is not a futile series of happenings in an empty world but a spiritual pilgrimage in which I am not alone. A character in Sartre's "*Hui Clos*" says, "Hell is other people". Counter to this, a character in Marcel's play '*Le Coeur des Autes*' says, "there is only suffering : to be alone". "The traveller's idea involves space and time in a dynamic way. Whereas the Sartrean or Heideggerian "situation" appears as a trap or net from which I try

66. Kurt F. Reinhart : op. cit p. 212.
67. Gabriel Marcel : A percus sur la Liberte (in La Nef, No. 19, 1946), p. 73.
68. Kurt F. Reinhart : op. cit p. 212.
69. Gabriel Marcel : Existentialisme Chretien, p. 308.

to cut free, the traveller's way is set among paths which I can choose. The traveller confronts his presence, accepts his past and projects his future. In this way life has a direction, an ontological goal. The horizontal dimension, our relations with others, and the vertical dimension, relation to the Divine Being, are both illumined through the Incarnation of Christ, the Son of God who travels with man along the path of every day."[70]

A Critical Estimate

Marcel stands between Kierkegaard and Sartre equipped with his original insights and observations. Any assessment regarding Marcel must appreciate that he is striving to work out a "higher empiricism" and ontology. He is his best critic, formulating as early as the Metaphysical Journal in a passage dated February 26, 1923, what for many people will be the most telling objection to his work. The fundamental objection that may work may have to face would be formulated as follows : "You struggle to find in the very structure of the real a justification for particular proceedings in human thought. But are you sure that your attitude is legitimate ? Will it not be that these proceedings are explained by practical conditions (of psychology, sociology, etc.) to which the being is submitted ? This objection pre-supposes that there is a radical distinction between the strict facts of experience and what is only a simple state of mind, a subjective disposition."[71]

The rigorous charge of subjectivism against Marcel will be made from a perspective in which it is assumed that the subject is one-dimensional, clearly distinct from the world outside. But this charge is overruled when we go through his literature impartially. To lay emphasis on subjectivism does not mean to overlook objectivism. It is his religious insight and critical

70. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 79.
71. Gabriel Marcel : Metaphysical Journal, p. 296.

approach that has taken shape in his literature. The meaning as conceived by Marcel has been vehemently criticised by many thinkers. A well-known critic remarks, "The unsystematic character of Gabriel's thought has been likened to a winding path, an image which Marcel himself approves."[72] Marcel is aware of his shaking position and tries his best to offer some of his most illuminating remarks on his conception of being, he sets forth three meanings for this term[73] : (1) being as the foundation, grounding every particular being and all experience, (2) being as absolute plenitude, the fulfilment of the ontological exigency, (3) being as said of "a-being", which sheds light on the mysterious connection between being-as-foundation and being as anticipated plenitude.

Marcel does not mean what the Thomists call the act of existing (esse), or what he himself calls simply the fact or act of being. Rather for Marcel to exist is not just to say I am but to say in effect. "I am manifest." And he suggests : "It might be better, indeed, instead of saying, prefix ex—meaning out, outwards, out front-in "exist" has the greatest importance. I exist—that is as much as I say : I have something to make myself known and recognised both by others and by myself..."[74] Marcel uses the classical category of Being, becoming and existence in the service of philosophy in a grand manner in order to found a philosophy of man. In his preface to Man Against Humanity[75]—he writes : "The dynamic element in my philosophy, taken as a whole, can be seen as an

72. Kennath T. Gallagher : The Philosophy of Gabriel Marcel, (New York : Forham University Press, 1962), p. 12.
73. Gabriel Marcel : Tragic Wisdom and Beyond, trans. by Stephen Jolin and Peter McCornick (Evanston : Notthwestern University Press, 1973), pp. 14, 45.
74. Gabriel Marcel : The Mystery of Being, Vol. I, pp. 111-112.
75. Gabriel Marcel : Man Against Humanity, p. 1.

obstinate and untiring battle against the spirit of abstraction." Often Marcel has been accused of pessimism, because he devotes too much attention to the dark underside of the soul, as expressed in suicide, betrayal, and despair. His reply like that of the other existentialists is that "these states are studied not for their own sake but for their illumination of human existence. For only through such an unbinkling appraisal of our precious situation can we realize that freedom does place our lives at stake. Normally it consists not in turning away from the knowledge of good and evil but in seeing the issues clearly."[76] The fundamental issue is that being is constantly threatened. Marcel strives for betterment. In presenting an erudite assessment of Marcel and Sartre, Prof. Lakshmi Saxena points out the difference between these thinkers. She concludes : " Philosophy seems to be taking a complete 'somersault' as it moves from Sartre to Marcel. While the formr speaks of man's unrestrained freedom, the latter says that authentic freedom consists only in the "active cultivation and enjoyment" of divine presence : an encounter with Transcendence alone is capable of liberating effectively from all hitherto accepted physical and social bonds."[77]

Further Prof. Saxena remarks, "Marcel is not happy with Sartre's well known phrase : man is "condemned to be free," for condemned just cannot carry the connotation which Sartre wishes to convey through it. It refers to a "deprivation" or "loss".[78] And so if freedom implies a lack, a deprivation or a loss it ceases to be value. It should signify, on the contrary, an absence of value.'[79]

76. James Collins : The Existentialists—a Critical Study, p. 143.
77. Lakshmi Saxena : Encounter with Transcendence, op. cit., p. 89.
78. Marcel : 'Existence and Human Freedom' in the Philosophy of Existentialism, p. 78.
79. Lakshmi Saxena : op. cit., p. 86.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Jean - Paul Sartre

Sartre's Epistemological Position

As for as the origin of Being-in-itself is concerned, Sartre rejects creationalism. There is no creation "ex nihilo". Creation is an anthropormorphism, invented by human beings after observation of what happens in the fabrication of material tools.[1] One of his characters in the Flies says "What do I care for Zeus ? Zeus is a matter of man and I need no God to teach me it." And Orestes, speaking to Zeus : "But you blundered, you should not have made me free. Neither slave, nor master, I am freedom. No sooner had you created me, than I ceased to be yours."[2] For if God created a thing, it belongs to His "intra-subjectivity"—and lacks *ipso facto* all "selbstandigkeit" whatsoever.[3]

The structure of the For-itself is classified under four heads : (i) The For-itself as impersonal. The first point which strikes one is that Sartre's Cogito (i. e., consciousness so far as it is conscious of something) is impersonal. On this point, namely the essence of the Ego from the cogito, Sartre separates himself completely from Husserl. Sartre set his own view forth in an article called "La Transcendence de l' Ego."[4] The consciousness is complete translucidity, facing the opacity of

1. Sartre : Existentialism, (New York : Philosophical Library, 1947), p. 18.
2. Sartre : The Flies (New York : Knoff, 1947), p. 157.
3. Wilfrid Desan : The Tragic Finale, pp. 12-174.
4. Sartre : "La Transcendence de l' Ego" in Recberches Philosophiques (1936-37), p. 85. quoted in Wilfrid Desan: The Tragic Finale, p. 12.

the object and nothing else. (ii) The For-itself as non-substantial : Being "impersonal", it is evident that Sartre's consciousness opposes itself flatly to what he calls Descarte's substantialistic error. The Sartrian consciousness is non-substantial. (iii) The For-itself as lack and desire. This may be understood as suggesting that some external being expels the In-itself from consciousness; it is the For-itself which posits itself and not being the In-itself. (iv) The For-itself is haunted by values and possibles. Value reveals itself through a human being who considers this or that as a value and gives it, *ipso facto*, into experience. Sartre is here completely rationalistic : "I am the being by which the values exist."[5]

The For-itself manages to have the world that it wants. "Man is the future of man."[6] That means that there is no weight of the past on him, and that man with no divine support or aid is condemned at every moment to invent man. "There is continually for each of us a future to be forged, a virgin future before us."[7] All this is only a consequence of the translucidity of the For-itself. "It is the subject, who in emerging, gives sense and value to things and no one thing reaches the subject without being touched as first by a sudden evaluation. Consequently, there is no action for things on the subject, there is only a centrifugal significance (in the active sense of the term, i. e., the subject himself gives sense and value to the external thing)."[8] As regards Sartre's notion of object, one notices in his Introduction,[9] a strong tendency to start from reality and not from thought, to accept the value of knowledge and to avoid making a problem of something which is only a pseudo-problem. In the commencement of his book

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5. Sartre : E. N., p. 76.
6. Ponge : quoted by Sartre in Existentialism, p. 28.
7. Sartre : Existentialism, pp. 28. f.
8. Merleau-Ponty : Phenomenology de la Perception (Paris, 1945), p. 498.
9. Sartre : E. N., pp. 11-34.

he states : "Modern thought has made considerable progress in reducing the existent to a series of apparitions which manifest the existent. An attempt has been made in this way to eliminate a certain number of dualisms and to replace them by the monism of the phenomenon."[10]

Concerning the origin of being, Sartre's assertion is plain : the world has "no reason, no cause, and no necessity."[11] He calls the existing being a contingent absolute.[12] Unfortunately, the problem remains without happy solution. Sartre is quite unable to explain the origin of the For-itself. He leaves it to the metaphysicians, however, "to formulate *hypotheses* which (Will) allow us to understand."[13] But after what he has thought of the notions of For-itself and In-itself, the metaphysicians will keep silent and stick to the "absurd", to use a Sartrian term. "We are in the heart of the absurd (indeed) and we wonder if Sartre does not condemn himself to move around in an infernal circle, wherein he has willingly locked himself up."[14]

Freedom—A Reinterpretation

Long ago Boetheus wrote in prison that he was free because of his spirit. A body could be imprisoned, not the eternally free spirit. Man cannot become a slave by choice because his freedom has nothing contingent about it; "What we call freedom is impossible to distinguish from the *being* of "human reality". Man does not exist *first* in order to be free subsequently; there is no difference between the *being* of man and his being-free."[15] Freedom is not a derivative phenomenon nor is it something to be achieved. Man is not free by

10. Ibid., p. 11.
11. Ibid., pp. 124, 713.
12. Ibid., p. 8.
13. Ibid., p. 717.
14. Gabriel Marcel : Homo Viator, p. 254.
15. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 25.

virtue of anything, unlike Boetheus who was free because of his essence which was spirit. But, Sartre's man *is* free, as existence precedes essence. According to existentialism, freedom is authentic living, but this authenticity or authentic attitude is seriously jeopardised by the demands and constraints placed on the individual by the family, the group, the society and other organizations. Thus, we have here the picture of a lonely individual fighting against all kinds of inauthenticity imposed on him by the society. This justifies the struggle of the existentialists to emancipate from what they call 'the spirit of seriousness,' the spirit of blind submission to ready-made values. This spirit represents the axiological condition of children for whom every new object has already been "seen, named, and classified by other people. Each object presents itself to him with a label; it is extremely reassuring and even sacred, because the look of the adult persons clings to it."[16] A thoroughgoing condemnation of this spirit of consciousness is made most conspicuous in Sartre's tragedy The Flies, where the people of Argos have been reduced to automations by their unquestionable conformity to the values thrust on them by their King Zeus. What is more distressing to man is not that his life as existence has been robbed of all its certainties but that he feels to have been "thrown" to stand all alone in 'a senseless stream of happenings'.[17] Sartre's world, in short, is an absurd and impossible universe, populated by contingent and isolated beings, all self-enclosed and merely physically juxtaposed in a metaphysical and moral vacuum.[18] The neighbour is "the other", and he is the enemy, and since God

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16. Sartre : Bauldelair (American ed. Norfolk, Coun; New Directions, 1950), p. 60.
17. R. K. Mukerji : "Freedom an Reinterpretation", A paper presented in a Seminar held in Yadavapur University on 9th & 10th January, 1978.
18. Kurt F. Reinhart : Existentialist Revolt, (Fredrick Ungar Publishing Co., New York, 1960), p. 168.

(if he existed) would be "the absolute other", he would logically be the most formidable and most hated enemy. "Hell", Sartre writes in Huis-Clos (No Exit), "that is the others." And Orestes, the Les Mouches (The Flies), asserts that "being can only affirm itself against its creator."

Sartre's freedom is somthing absolute, he rejects all determinism.[19] The result of this freedom in its most acute form is responsibility. We cannot escape responsibility. Human reality "carries on its shoulders the weight of the world."[20] For Sartre, the problem of value is conditioned by this basic anti-essentialism, by his atheism, and by his theory of freedom.[21] This ethical consequence of Sartre's metaphysics is a recurrent theme of his novels and plays. There is, for instance, Mathieu, the professor of philosophy, who finds himself in a dilemma : "He was free for everything, free to act like an animal or like a machine, free for accepting, free for refusing, free for shuffling.... He could do what he wanted to do, nobody had the right to achieve him. There would be neither right nor wrong unless he invented him...He was alone in a monstrous silence, free and alone, without help, without an excuse, condemned to decide without any possible recourse, condemned forever to be free."[22] And, in a similar way, another Sartre's heroes, Orestes, in the tragedy Les Mouches explains : "Suddenly freedom dashed upon me, as penetrated me...There was no longer anything in heaven, neither "good" nor "evil" nor anything to give me orders...I am condemned to have no law other than my own...For I am a man and each man has to invent his own way."[23]

By saying that human reality is freedom and that man has a "pre-ontological" comprehension of it, Sartre has exposed

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19. Wilfrid Desan : The Tragic Finale, p. 107.
20. Sartre : E. N., p. 639.
21. Alfred Stern : Sartre, p. 53.
22. Sartre : L' Age de Raison, p. 249.
23. Sartre : Les Mouches, pp. 100-101.

himself to the charge of "essentialism". "Sartre tries to describe man's essence. Man cannot escape the desire to be in-itself-for-itself...The for-itself has a fundamental structure... Sartre himself finds it impossible consistently to maintain a doctrine of absolute freedom."[24] The same critic again shows a gross misunderstanding of, or a deliberate unsympathetic attitude to the Sartrian concept of total freedom. "It is a mistake", the critic points out, "to say that I choose my own obstacle. The incompatibility is simply given; this is the way the world is."[25] Sharing the views of the critic in question, Mary Warmock, too, writes : "Despite Sartre's arguments, we may well deny that we at any rate choose what to feel, or how to react emotionally to the world."[26] Mr. Wilfrid Desan, under the same impression, experiences the same difficulty in accepting Sartre's claim of total human freedom. He comments : "Absolute freedom is mere illusion"...Sartre forgets too often that freedom does not start from nothing."[27] Such critics, against Sartre, betray a total misunderstanding of Sartre's idea of total freedom. Sartre never ignores the fact that there are "situation-limits" under which alone human freedom can operate. And if the meaning of Sartre's "total freedom" were to be construed in the manner as pointed out by the critics in question, anyone can argue that the whole chapter on "Facticity and Freedom" should have been written in vain. In postulating his theory, Sartre is never forgetful of the immense absurdity of facts or "brute existence" which seem to influence and determine the course of human actions. Sartre holds that consciousness itself is meaningless unless there is no object before it. Though it is dynamic in nature, yet its negative aspect is more impressive. "One characteristic element of human consciousness, according

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24. Alvin Plantings : An Existentialist Ethics in The Review of Metaphysics XII, 1978, p. 256.
25. Ibid., p. 254.
26. Mary Warnock : Existentialist Ethics, p. 55.
27. Wilfrid Desan : op. cit., pp. 170-71.

to Sartre, is negation, its capacity of saying, 'No'.[28]

Consciousness and Existence

Man as existent is a mystery, a paradox, and his nature and purposes cannot be summed up neatly in any formula. It is possible to say of human reality that, in each individual case, it *is*, but it is not possible to say *what* it is.[29] Man does not live as pure existence, but he may become aware of himself as such in the experience of Nausea. Roquentin, discovers in Nausea that: "The essential is contingency. I mean that, by definition, existence cannot be identified with necessity. To exist is to happen without reason ..Everything is purposeless, this garden, this town and myself.[30] He finds himself "astonished before this life which is given to me—given for nothing." Roquentin is immobilized by the feeling that his own life, together with all the world, is meaningless.

Three theories of motivation have been distinguished within Sartre's theory of man. These three theories can be termed fundamental desire, original project, and authentic existence. All three might be classified as subjective, since they trace the source of value to the individual consciousness. The most general theory, metaphysical in nature, is summed up in Sartre's statement that "man fundamentally is the desire to be God."[31] The original project is a project of realizing certain transcendent goals, which represent the ultimate values of an individual. The view that individual acts can be interpreted in terms of a projected ideal state of the individual is not new. The psychologist Adler had written : "...while worrying about the tendencies, milieu, and experiences, all psychical powers are under the control of a directive idea and all expressions of emotion, feeling, thinking, willing, acting and dreaming, as

28. Kurt F. Reinhart : The Existential Revolt, p. 160.
29. Norman N. Green : Sartre; The Existentialist Ethics, p. 25.
30. Sartre : La Nausea (Paris, 1938), p. 238.
31. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, trans. Hazel Barnes (New York, 1956), p. 566.

well as psycho-pathological phenomena, are permeated by one unified life-plan."[32] In general perspective of Sartre's work, it would seen that he also is more concerned than Adler with the relation between the individual project and the social context. Many of the critics find that freedom cannot be reconciled with the theory of the original project and accuse Sartre of being a psycho-physiological determinist. The problem has been stated as follows : "Sartre appears not to recognise that if man is the "foundation without foundation" of his values and if the "foundation without foundation" of his values are equivalent to his fundamental project of being, then this project cannot be chosen since it is the ultimate and irreducible fact in terms of which his choices are made."[33] The fact of human freedom means that "...in the bright realm of values, we have no excuse behind us, nor justification before us."[34] To say that man lacks excuse or justification is just another way of saying that man makes himself, and therefore, is responsible for what he is. "...existentialism's first move is to make every man aware of what he is and to make the full responsibility of his existence rest on him."[35] What is new in Sartre's ethics is his version of the existentialist virtue of authenticity, which replaces the Christian Love Commandment. Authenticity requires of man not a code of conduct but a way of life. The term existence used by Sartre, therefore, sometimes takes on a second meaning, that of

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32. Alfred Adler : The Practice and Theory of Indian Psychology, (New York, 1929), p. 3. quoted in Alfred Stern : Sartre, His Philosophy & Psycho-analysis (New York, 1953), p. 109.
33. Robert Olson, "The Three Theories of Motivation in the Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre, "Ethics, LXVI, No. 3 (April, 1956), p. 187.
34. Sartre : Existentialism, trans. Bernard Frenchtman (New York, 1947), p. 27
35. Ibid., p. 19.

true or authentic existence as opposed to the absurd existence revealed by the experience of nausea : "...man is constantly outside of himself; in projecting himself, in losing himself outside of himself, he makes for man's existing; and, on the other hand, it is by persuing transcendent goals that he is able to exist;..."[36] Authentic existence is directly related to the being of man. "...authenticity is a kind of honesty or a kind of courage; the authentic individual is afraid to face."[37]

Sartre has frequently been accused of inconsistency for insisting that individual has an obligation to assume his freedom, or, put another way, that once man has become conscious of his freedom he must recognise it as valuable. According to Alfred Stern : "...the absolute value which he ascribes to authenticity and sincerity cannot be justified by his own philosophy; for we know that the latter does not admit any value of supra-individual validity, given before an individual choice...According to this philosophy, the acceptance of the absolute value of authenticity could even he characterised as a manifestation of unauthenticity, that is of the spirit of seriousness, which considers values as transcendent data...so it would seem that only through a fortunate inconsequence of his philosophy does the latter escape nihilism and become an irrationalist absolute idealism."[38] Man's sole grandeur is defined by his personal responsibility for an individual choice effected in the face of a situation presented from without : "Thus freedom is discovered only in action and is intimately fused with it... It is not an innate virtue that gives us license to break away from the most compelling situation...It is rather the power to commit our-

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36. Ibid., pp. 59-60.

37. Marjorie Green : "Authenticity : an Existentialist Value", Ethics, LXII, No. 4 (July, 1952), p. 267.

38. Alfred Stern : Sartre, His Philosophy and Psycho-analysis, (New York, 1953), pp. 208-9.

selves to the task at hand and to construct a future."[39] Flung into a world he did not desire, born against his will, unjustified in a situation he did not choose, man is for Sartre sheer creation, summed up in the possibility of making decisions with respect to a given situation : "A life is constitued by the future as bodies are constituted by the void."[40]

Man in Sartre's view is never bound by previous obligations, never limited by prefigurations or models; he is emerging, unchecked by the past. "Man is not the sum of what he has but the totality of what he still lacks, of what he might have."[41] For Sartre, good and evil are variable realities *relative to each particular situation and that they are not reducible in advance to a code.* In The Flies, God in the form of Jupitor is presented as a sort of tyrant who imposes on man a petrified notion of Good : "For the world is good; I created it according to my own will and I am Good."[42] Sartre usually depicts a God infatuated with his own person and his creation : "Good is inside of you, outside of you : it cuts through you like a scythe, it crushes you down like a mountain, it sweeps you up and spins you around like the sea."[43] Man is free : "Once freedom has exploded in a human soul, the Gods are powerless."[44] The discipline dealing with the different task of For-itself in the sense of its projects, Sartre terms existential psycho-analysis. Sartre writes : "Thus existential psycho-analysis is moral description, for it releases to us the ethical meaning of various human projects."[45] Against his critics Sartre says : "We seek to base our teaching upon the truth, and not upon a

39. Sartre : Situations III, pp. 205-206.
40. Sartre : L' Age de raison, p. 216.
41. Sartre : Situation, I, p. 80
42. Sartre : Theatre, p. 98.
43. Ibid., p. 99.
44. Sartre : Theatre, p. 79.
45. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 626.

collection of fine theories, full of hope but lacking real foundations."[46] Unlike Kierkegaard, Sartre does not stress the possession of an "inner life". By subjective life he means rather that man is "something which propels itself towards a future and is aware that it is doing so." In a Godless universe the "invention" of values rests squirely upon man. It is for this reason that Sartre says, "Existentialism is nothing else but an attempt to draw the full conclusions from a consistently atheist position."[47] According to Sartre, man is both the recogniser of value and the bearer of value.[48]

Dynamism of Nothingness : Nausea

Mary Warnock, who is one of the few English philosophers to take Sartre seriously, explains his idea of "nothingness" in the following way : "It is through the existence of this emptiness, separating a person from the world of things about him, that the possibility arises of thinking or acting as one chooses. There is necessarily, in a conscious being, an area of free play, as it were between himself and the world. The emptiness has to be filled, and is filled by whatever he plans to do, or to think, or to be. Consciousness, Sartre says, places itself at a distance from its objects, and the gap between itself and its objects is identical with the power to confirm or deny what it chooses. Freedom and consciousness thus turn out to be the very same thing. They are both identified with the power to consider things either as they are or as they are not, to imagine situations which are different from the actual situations obtaining in the world; and therefore to form plans to change what there is."[49] Sartre's disenchantment with the superficiality of society

46. Sartre : Existentialism and Humanism, p. 44.
47. Ibid., p, 56.
48. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit. p. 60.
49. M. Warnock : Existentialist Ethics, Macmillan, London, 1967, p. 21.

and his quest for an existential understanding of man stemmed from the fluid and insecure times of Europe between two-World-Wars.[50] The 'heroes' of Nausea and The Wall presented the absurdity of this human experience. In these works Sartre portrayed the daily existence of Squator, loneliness, and involvement of human beings—a life with nothing in sight. Antonie Roquentin, describes the boredom that seems to penetrate him to the marrow : "I held the book I was reading tightly in my hands: but the most violent sensation went dead. Nothing seemed true; I felt surrounded by cardboard scenery which could quickly be removed. The world was waiting, holding its breath, making itself small—it was waiting for its convulsion, its Nausea."[51]

Things have lost their daily features and nomenclature, and the nausea keeps spreading. It reaches a state of absurdity. Roquentin's own body becomes strange to him : "I see my hand spread on the table. It lives—it's me...It shows me it's flat belly. It looks like an animal turned up side down."[52] Roquentin makes us realize that our lives have no intrinsic meaning and consciousness consists of no other element except the negation of being. Somehow, the Nothingness is the product of existence. Nothingness is meaningful only in the perspective of being. "Non-being exists only on the surface of being."[53] The nothingness of Sartre is 'the other' of Plato. But, like Sartre, Plato did not realise that the otherness could remain in the form of consciousness. Human life is a perpetual striving. Tired of taxing and ceaseless efforts, the worldly people falter in their struggle to achieve lucidity and make decisions, then things no longer have a meaning and their existence seems

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50. Jack D. Douglass and John M. Johnson (Editor) : Existentialist Sociology, p. 104.
51. Sartre : Nausea (1964), pp. 76-77.
52. Ibid., p. 98.
53. Sartre ; Being and Nothingness, p. 16.

"dull, obscene, gratuitous."[54] They feel that they are superfluous "I want to leave, to go somewhere, where I would really be *in my place* and fit in...But my place is nowhere; I do n't belong."[55] And Jupiter in The Flies shows Orestes that man is not an object with a place in the world but a consciousness exiled to the world : "You do n't belong here, intruder. You are in the world like a splinter in the flesh, like a poacher in a seigniorial forest..."[56] Besides this, Sartre attaching value to human efforts, says that this intruder, this exile, is only being through whom meanings appear in the world. "Perhaps, we *are not* for ourselves like things. Perhaps we simply *are not* at all. Always in question, always being postponed, perhaps we must perpetually *make* ourselves."[57]

Moral Values : Good and Evil

The editor of a recent anthology of twentieth-century philosophy describes the existentialists as 'hedgehogs' of contemporary philosophy. He uses the term, taken from Isaiah Berlin's The Hedgehog and the Fox, to indicate the difference between existentialism and the dominant philosophical movements of the Anglo-Saxon countries; the existentialists are interested in one big-thing—"philosophies as maps of the universe or as total insights into man's desperate, anxious, forlorn existence,"[58] while the analytical philosophies are interested in one or many little things, such as the methods of science or the meaning of the words. Sartre makes a thorough representation of existential trends. True existence is something beyond the assumption of an attitude; it is making of free decisions. "...if man has once become aware that in his

54. Sartre : Les Mouches, Theatre, p. 102.
55. Sartre : La Nausea, pp. 159-160.
56. Sartre : Les Mouches, Theatre, p. 98.
57. Sartre : Baudelaire, p. 47.
58. Morton White : The Age of Analysis (Boston, 1955), p. 18.

forlornness he imposes values, he can no longer want but one thing, and that is freedom, as the basis of all values. That does n't mean that he wants it in the abstract. It means simply that the ultimate meaning of the acts of honest man is the quest for freedom as such."[59] Thus Sartre speaks rarely of authenticity and constantly of engagement, by which he means free commitment to a course of action. Commitment has two aspects, subjective and objective. The subjective aspect of commitment is substantially the requirement of authenticity. The objective aspect of commitment is derived from the fact that an act is essentially a relation between the actor and the world. "A man cannot become the person he wants to be merely by thinking about himself, but only by doing something with himself. This requires involving himself in the affairs of others, in adapting himself to social pressures, in transforming his environment."[60]

Sartre's position has been described as follows : "...Sartre gives a quite special meaning to his dictum that, in authentic choice, the individual is also choosing for other people. It is not merely a reformulation of the ethical common place that man is a political animal. It's primary basis is ontological. If the fundamental project of the self is to constitute its world, then it cannot choose for-itself without determining the relative position of other selves within its own world. Having care for other man is the same as having care for...one's perspective, insofar as it involves other selves as constituent factors. They must be ordered as objects gathered about the primary subject or free self."[61]

An Existentialist in Politics

Sartre is critical of the important ideologies of his time

59. Sartre : Existentialism, pp. 53-54.
60. Ralph Harper : Existentialism, A New Theory of Man (Cambridge, Mass), p. 103.
61. James Collins : The Existentialists (Chicago, 1952), pp. 76-77.

because he feels that they do not give an adequate role to individual freedom, and even encourage in their followeıs a flight from freedom into bad faith. His positive contribution to social theory would thus seem to lie in a reformulation of the concept of freedom. "...Everything which resembles closely or distantly existentialism...is a problem of freedom."[62] Sartre's discussion of freedom is, however, not always as clear as might be expected. He says in one place that man wants freedom, and in another that man is condemned to be free. The Marxists accuse him of irrationalism as neglect of social and environmental determinism of human nature, the liberals of nihilism, and the Catholics of pessimism. Yet, his writings uplift a strong concern with the rational and morals, the possibility of human betterment through social reform. Sartre combines a belief in man's freedom with a desire to liberate him : "If man is not originally free, it is impossible even to conceive what his liberation would be."[63] The name that Sartre gives to this liberating remedy is 'authenticity'. He defines it : "Authenticity, it is obvious, consists in having a lucid and truthful awareness of the situation in bearing the responsibilities and risks which the situaiion demands, in taking it upon oneself with pride or humility sometime with horror and hatred."[64] A critic has drawn a similarity between Sartre and Freud : "In this final suspension, Freud's ethic resembles Sartre's existentialism, which offers a related criticism, authenticity, as a way of judging what is good in human action ..(but). As a purely explanatory and scientific ideal, honesty has no content. Though the Freudian training involves intellectual judgement based on

62. Translated from Albert Pasquier : Les Doctrines Sociales en France 1930-1950 (Paris, 1950), p. 174. quoted in Norman N. Green : An Existentialist Ethics, p. 167.
63. Sartre : Situations, III, p. 207.
64. Sartre : Reflactexions sur la question juive, quoted in Anthony Mansers : Sartre—A Philosophical Study, p. 148.

a calm and natural appraisal of all the demanding elements of a life-situation, still, the freedom to choose must end in choice. Here, at the crucial moment, the Freudian ethic of honesty ceases to be helpful. Being honest, admitting one's nature, does not resolve specific issues of choice. To achieve greater balance in the psyche, to shift the relative weights of instinct and repression, installs no new substantive rules of decision."[65]

The materialist metaphysics of Marxism is considered by Sartre to be a product of the exigencies of a revolutionary moment. "...the essential fear of man, above all if he is suffering, is not so much death or the existence of a strict God, but, simply that the state of things from which he suffers has been produced and is maintained from transcendent, and unknown ends; any effort to change it would then be guilty and vain; a subtle discouragement would penetrate him, affecting even his judgements, and would prevent him from desiring and even from concerning an improvement."[66] Sartre observes that the revolutionary realises the reality of non-subjective factors and their impact on human life. As a member of an oppressed class, he must live the harsher side of the social order. "Death, unemployment, the repression of a strike,...are everyday realities which are experienced with horror...they retain above all a stubborn and irrational reality."[67] Sartre's novels are the most 'philosophic' literary medium; connected with morality and politics. A renowned critic has said of the novelist: "He has always been, what the very latest philosophers claim to be, a describer rather than an explainer; and in consequence he has often anticipated the philosopher's discoveries."[68] His characters are baffled by the gap between intension and fulfilment,

65, P. Rieff : Freud, the Mind of a Moralist, p. 312.

66. Translated from Sartre : "Materialisme et revolution", op. cit. p. 191.

67. Ibid., pp. 210-11.

68. Iris Murdoch : Sartre, p. 8.

the perpetual conflict between public and private. Sartre's attitude of revolt was a protest against the *universe as a whole*, not against any particular feature of it. He was struck by the contradiction between the rationality of man and the absurdity of things. In the essay Materialisme et revolution, Sartre distinguishes between revolt and revolution. "Thus, the revolutionary, because he is aware of the social structure on which he depends, demands a philosophy which comprehends his situation, and, as his action has no meaning unless it questions the lot of mankind, this philosophy must be total, that is to say, it must illuminate the whole of the human condition."[69] Sartre made use of the term 'personal alienation' to describe the nature of bad faith, which forms the core of Marxist philosophy.[70]

Sartre declares himself to be "strongly opposed to a certain kind of secular ethics which would like to abolish God with the least possible expense."[71] Liberals abolish God, or at any rate, refuse to accept revelation as the basis of ethics. Sartre evaluates natural rights, liberalism, as a political ideology. He views the individual rights as a function of a particular social order and not a universal order of nature.[72] The most influential early critic of liberalism was undoubtedly Hegel. Hegel was not content to devalue the positive social role of individual reason : One ought to have the firm and invincible faith that there is Reason in history and to believe that the world of intelligence and self-conscious willing is not abandoned to mere chance...'[73]

69. Sartre : Situations, III, p. 180.
70. Anthony Mansers : Sartre—A Philosophical Study, p. 178.
71. Sartre : Existentialism, trans. Bernard Frenchtman (New York, 1947), p. 25.
72. Translated from Jean-Paul Sartre : "Preseatation des temps moderaes", II (Paris, 1948), p. 17.
73. George Wilhelm Friedrick Hegel : Reason in History, A General Introduction to the Phil. of History, trans. Robert S. Hartman (New York), p. 12.

The Modern Proteus

According to mythology, Proteus was a god of the sea who, having received from Neptune the gift of prophesy; escaped from those eager to know his secrets by changing at will into a variety of forms. Sartre finds the communist view of man in the world to be as illusive as the ancient Proteus. Instead of finding the Marxism, professed by the communists a logically coherent system, he considers it a bundle of contradictory positions. Marxist Materialism is then a metaphysical doctrine which reduces mind to matter and eliminate subjectivity by reducing the world, including man, to a system of objects interconnected by universal relations. In fact, if man is an object, all possibility of a rational understanding of the world disappears: "...if psychic facts are the effect of biological causes and biological facts, in turn, of the physical state of the world, I can see that human consciousness can express the world in the way that an effect expresses its cause, but not in the way that a thought expresses its object. A captive reason, governed by the outside, manoeuvered by blind chains of cause and effect, how would this be reason !"[74]

Neo-Marxism and Critique of Dialectical Reasoning

Sartre is willing to say with the Marxists that "each age develops, according to, dialectical laws,"[75] but the meaning which he gives to the term dialectic differs from the Marxist usage. The nature of this difference in meaning is indicated by his statement that : "every theory, be it scientific or philosophic, is probable. The proof is that scientific and historical theses vary and that they are offered in the form of hypothesis."[76] Within the context of Sartre's existentialist theory of history, the dialectic serves a method for investigating the "situation"

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74. Translated from Jean-Paul Sartre : "Materialisme et revolution". Situations, III (Paris, 1949), pp, 142-43.
75. Sartre : Existentialism, p. 87.
76. Ibid., p. 86.

of a period, or "the ensemble of material and even psycho-analytical conditions which, in a given age, give a specific character to an ensemble."[77] Sartre welcomes much of Marxist historiography but rejects the Marxist philosophy of history. Sartre regards the absolute in history as the human condition itself, while, for the Marxist the absolute is economic base in its dynamic and evolutionary forms. "Sartre preserves the spiritual orientation of Hegel but substitutes the existing individual for the idea, while the Marxists preserve the objective development characteristic of the Hegelian-Idea but abandon the spiritual for a material orientation."[78]

Sartre differs from Marx at the origin of the problem of alienation. The original sin is not man's aim to produce the necessities of life, but the existence of the other. The individual is alienated by being placed in a world where he is not free. Alienation is far more pervasive for Sartre than it is for Marx, since it arises from the fact of social life, and not from the mode of production. Lukacs admits that Sartre's strictness against Marxists are justified. He observes that Marxist take economic determinism to mean a sort of mechanical relationship between the economic system and human consciousness, a point of view which neglects the role of human subjectivity in historical development; "...the emphasis on subjectivity constitutes the relatively justified element in existentialism ..It is a question, in effect of underlying that it is men themselves who make their history, just as much in private life as in public affairs."[79] The attempt of Sartre is to emphasise the creative role of the individual personality, and the being of man as a process rather than a static entity. If the existentialist says that life has no meaning but that which the individual brings

77. Ibid., p. 88.
78. Norman N. Green : An Existentialist Ethics, p. 142.
79. Translated from George Lukacs : Existentialisme on Materialisme ? (Paris, 1948), pp. 146-47.

to it, this does not mean that he believes that *his* life has no meaning. Lukacs fails to grasp this.[80] Sartre's objection to Marxism, of course, are directed against just this aspect of Marxist doctrine and what he regards as the philosophical errors responsible for it. He also sees an absolute in history, but it is the absolute of what he is fond of calling a "committed freedom". Herbert Read has described as the greatest contribution of existentialism the view "that man is the reality—not even man in the abstract, but the human person, you and I; and that everything else—freedom, love, reason, God—is a contingency of depending on the will of the individual."[81]

Sartre's approach seems to have been prompted by ethical rather than orthodox Marxist economic considerations. Sartre's concern with history is therefore, with the future, not with the questions whence we have come and what we hope for, but with what we are to do. Apart from these indications, there are the more obvious landmarks. Merleau-Ponty's 'Humanism and Terror' included the following statements : "We do not have the choice between purity and violence but between different sorts of violence. Violence is our world in as much as we are creatures of flesh and blood...Violence is the common point of departure from all regimes. Life, discussion, political choice, all take place against this background."[82] Sartre found this an eye-opener as far as political action and its implications were concerned. By dialectic he means "not a blind law but a *lived reality* resulting from the multitude of men acting within themselves and with one another dialectically."[83] In Nausea and in Being and Nothingness, Jean-Paul Sartre started from the interiority of consciousness. Marxism starts from something *external* to consciousness—the biological and social datum of the human collectivity and its class structure. Far from concea-

80. Ibid., p. 98.
81. Herbert Read : Existentialism, Marxism and Anarchism London, 1950, p. 10.
82. Merleau-Ponty : Humanism and Terror, 1947, pp. 117-18.
83. Wilfrid Desan : The Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartrep, 78.

ling this opposition, Sartre still acknowledges it, "We were *at the same time* convinced that historical materialism provided the only valid interpretation of history, and that existentialism consituted the only concrete approach to reality."[84] In the preface to his Critique of Dialectical Reasoning, he affirms that in its present form communism has become a sterile, compulsory doctrine, that through neglect even its fountainhead remains obstructed : "After attracting us as the moon attracts the tide, after transforming all our ideas, after effacing in us the categories of bourgeois thought, Marxism suddenly left us on a plateau; it failed to satisfy our need to understand; it no longer had anything to teach us, for it had stopped."[85]

Sartre was obviously influenced by Franz Kafka's The Metamorphosis. Kafka's philologists explain that this story illustrates man's complete isolation as a punishment for his hidden wish to escape his responsibilities toward human society. For, existentialists, not only discover the absurd where-it is, but also invent it where it is not.[86] In his novels, Sartre has tried repeatedly to show that all of us are superfluous, supernumeracy (de trop), and that nobody is really necessary. When Second World-War was about to break out, Mathien, the hero of Le Sursis (The Reprieve), had the following conversation with his brother Jacques.

"Mathieu : "Peace or War ! That does not make any difference..."

Jacques : "No difference ? Tell this to those millions of men who are preparing to be killed ?"

Mathieu : "And so what ! They carried their death in themselves since their birth. And they have all been slaughtered to the last, mankind will still be as

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84. Sartre : Critique de la raison dialectique, p. 24.
85. Ibid., p. 25.
86. Alfred Stern : Sartre, p. 16.

full as before; without a gap; without one missing."

Jacques :—"Minus twelve to fifteen million men."

Mathieu the existentialist professor of philosophy, answers that "this is not a question of numbers", with or without those men the world will continue to go "nowhere."[87]

Since, according to Sartre, there is no reality but in action and man "is nothing but the sum of his acts,"[88] he exists only in the measure be realizes his project. When his friend Brunof, a communist, comes to see Mathieu to invite to become a member of the Communist Party, Mathieu hesitates. He does want to engage him himself: "You are free. But what is freedom good for it not to engage oneself...? You are floating, you are an abstract, an absent one ?"[89]

The Sense of Otherness and Bad Faith

Life in its perpetually becoming state proves difficult for man, who must create his own world at every instant. This responsibility is a heavy burden for man, and consequently, man attempts to escape it. Sartre called this attempt to escape "bad faith", which is the self-deception derived from deluding oneself, from routinizing one's exterior world into pre-established patterns. Men are seen as turning to others in their attempt to be, to feel reassured by being recognised as a self by others.[90]

Sartre expressed his concern about the others in The Wall and No Exit. In these plays he showed man attempting to establish his own personality by relying on the definitions of others. In No Exit, one of the characters seeks to see himself

87. Sartre : Lu Sursis (The Reprieve), p. 168.
88. Sartre : L' Existentialisme, p. 55.
89. Sartre : L' Age de Raison, p. 123.
90. Jackson & Douglass (ed) : Existential Sociology, p. 109.

through mirrors. "There were six big mirrors in my bedroom. Whenever I talked, I would be in a position when I could watch myself in one of them. As I talked I could see myself talking. I saw myself as other people see me, and that kept me awake."[91] It is in this concept of the others that Sartre's social philosophy assumes great importance for a sociological discipline. If man, in order to come to see his unfolding consciousness, stopped in a static picture, a reconstructed self, turns to others, then a social relationship is established. Sartrian man has no paramount reality, no pre-determined text; he creates his own reality. He is a Roquentin, who says : "I am in the midst of things, nameless things. Alone, without words, defenceless, they surround them, are beneath me, along me. They demand nothing, they don't impose themselves : they are there."[92] The others after all, are not my allies, they may reject my presentation of self, they may not support my claim to reality, and then, as Sartre put it : "No bimstone is necessary; hell is other people."[93]

Sartre's social philosophy can be seen as a moral one, because man is morally committed to choose. Man is tragic for Sartre because of the extremes he will reach in attempting to seek and maintain conformity. Sartre's most poignant example of this extreme comes from a play, The Respectable Prostitute. Lizzie the prostitute, is placed in a position to accuse an innocent black man, whom the town believes guilty of having raped her, in order to protect the guilty party who is an influential white man; Lizzie listens to the frightingly compelling logic of the Senator, who is a close relation of the guilty man; the Senator confronts Lizzie with the social worth and utility of the two men :

Senator : He is one hundred person American, the Scion of

91. Sartre : No Exit, 1947, p. 136.
92. Sartre : Nausea, 1946, p. 25.
93. Sartre : No Exit, 1947, p. 182.

one of our oldest families, a Harvard graduate, an officer...he has the duty to live...

Senator : Lizzie, what good is this Negro that you protect ? He was born by chance, God knows where...He was nourished (by the Nation) and in exchange, what has he done ? Absolutely nothing...

Senator : Do you believe that a whole town could be wrong ?'"[94] Lizzie does not believe it and she gives in it the Senator, letting the Negro be lynched in the name of social order.[95]

In atheistic philosophy there is an aspect of existential guilt where escape is impracticable. It is a kind of 'original sin'. Here the phenomenon is the root cause of guilt. "My original Fall is the existence of the other.'"[96] We feel shame as well as guilt because of our outer aspect of life. We give vent to our guilt in front of other. "It is before the other that I am guilty, I am guilty first when beneath the other's look I experience my alienation and my nakedness as a fall from grace which I must assume."[97] To become the object is to face opposition and tension and consequently it is nothing but guilt.

Sartre nourishes no cheap hope and conviction in divine agencies. A few critics have remarked that Sartre has always been hostile towards the ethical doctrines in his heyday of literary career. Prof. Norman N. Green has refuted this remark by his keen observation that through the analysis of 'bad faith', presented by Sartre one can assess his personal opinion regarding ethics and morality. "...his use of an analysis of 'bad faith' to reveal the nature of being-for-itself would seem likely to have followed upon a prior interest in 'bad faith' as a moral

94, Sartre : The Respectable Prostitute, 1947, pp. 299-300,

95. Quoted in Existential Sociology, ed. Jackson and Douglass, p. 112.

96, Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 263.

97. Ibid., p. 410.

phenomena."[98] The doctrine of morality advocated by Sartre is inseparably connected with the freedom of man. Basically, man is free. No determinism whether empirical or transcendental, is acceptable to Sartre; neither he has any room for fortune nor Providence of God. The world is not a long desert nor the man is a solitary traveller. He has a sense of sociability which compells him to be responsible to the external world.[99] Man tries to take refuge in the belief in some outside agency—God, Nature or Society which demands of him a definite way of living and choosing. In other words, in order to escape his anguish man continuously takes refuge in the "serious world."[100] The meaning of the "serious world" can be understood in contrast to our playing a game.[101] Rules of game are binding on the person because he has consented to accept them as binding. The rules are invented and they are always open to change. Human life is like a game. It has no reason and no justification. Every man has to make his own life. "Bad faith" is a "lie to oneself but it is different from lying in general."[102] Bad faith, therefore, is an attitude which involves conscious self-deception. "Sartre's play "The Flies" is a brilliant analysis of human psychology manifesting bad faith. 'Dirty Hands' and 'Lucifer and the Lord' are the plays wherein Sartre depicts how bad faith infects the religious life of man. Regarding the latter, Sartre says that "the play throughout deals with the relation of man to God, or if you prefer it, the relation of man to the absolute."[103] Sartre's analysis of bad faith shows that all human relations and endeavours are infected with bad faith. But this does not mean that good faith is impossible. By exposing the reality of bad faith,

98. Norman N. Green : The Existential Ethics, p. 45.
99. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 556.
100. Cf. Barnes, Hazel E. : The Literature of Possibility, p. 48.
101. Ibid., p. 48.
102. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 48.
103. Quoted in Sartre, A Philosophical Study, p. 234.

Sartre brings forth the importance of the problem of self-identity and self-knowledge.

Human Life as Portrayed in The Theatre of Sartre

Sartre's dramatic heroes attempt to transcend obsession of freedom. They are defined by change, usually in relation to one irrevocable act. Men change the world and are themselves changed by the act of changing it. For Sartre, to act is to change, to bring into being something that does not yet exist. At the same time, he tries to find in action a means of escaping from isolation by creating out of his act a magical bond between himself and other man. Iris Murdoch makes the important point that "Sartre is interested in man not so much as a "rational" being, as a reflecting being, self-picturing, self-deceiving, and actually aware of the regard of others."[104] The Flies is the first work in which Sartre presents an ethics of freedom. In a foot-note to the chapter of Being and Nothingness, "Concrete relations with others", Sartre indicates that his description of human reality does not exclude "the possibility of an ethics of deliverance and salvation." But, he continues, "this can be achieved only after a radical conversion."[105] Such a radical conversion takes place, as we see in Act II of The Flies; it involves a complete transformation in Oreste's understanding and use of his freedom. In committing murder, Orestes over-throws the moral and religious laws established by Jupiter. He has discovered that there are no apriori values, and that he must therefore bear the anguish of full responsibility for investing values of his acts. Against Jupiter, Orestes will reveal to the people of Argos the freedom for "human life begins on the far side of despair."[106] Harry Slockower contends that Orestes' murder of Clytemnestra in The Flies is unmotivated; he remarks that in Aeschylus' Play Orestes is motivated by obedience to

104. Iris Murdoch : Sartre, Romantic Rationalist, p. 81.

105. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 412.

106. Sartre : The Flies, Act-III.

Apollo, in O'Neill's by incest, and in Giraudoux's by Electras' fanaticism. There are no such compelling reasons for Sartre's Orestes to murder his mother. "The sole legitimacy for Orestes' murder is the tradition of the legend itself. That is, in this 'free' Existentialist act, Sartre's hero acts most like an unfree man, enslaved by the mere ritual of the old myth."[107] Throughout the play, Sartre does not hesitate to mingle Greek mythology with Christian doctrine.[108] As Pierre-Henri Simon has observed, "Sartre's Orestes is exactly the Anti-Christ : he who opposes to Christian redemption another kind of redemption, saving men because he feels them not from sin but from fear of sin— in short, because he relegates God to nothingness."[109] In a sense The Flies is what Jacques Guicharnaud calls "a sumptuous metaphor intended to show man that responsibility is not synonymous with guilt."[110]

(i) The Devil and the Good Lord

Sartre has insisted that it was not his purpose in writing 'The Devil and the Good Lord' to demonstrate that God does not exist. He stopped believing in God when he was twelve years old, he has asserted, "the problem of God interests me very little."[111] Robert Chapigny makes important point that, "It is not the metaphysical problem of the existence of a divinity that concerns Sartre; but it is the psychological and ethical implications of a hieratic way of thinking."[112] In another sense, too, Goetz's evil does not count as real. He pays

107. Slockower : The Function of Myth in Existentialism", Yale French Studies, I, 46.
108. Dorothy McCall : The Theatre of Jean-Paul Sartre, pp. 104-122.
109. Pierre-Henri Simon : Theatre & Destin, p. 179.
110. Jacques Guicharnaud : "Man and His Acts : Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus" in Modern French Theatre from Girandoux to Beckett, p. 137.
111. Interview with Sartre, January 7, 1964.
112. Robert Champigny : Stages on Sartre's Way, p. 124.

no price for what he has done; his acts carry no consequences that limit his future possibilities. In Saint Genet, Sartre analyses Genet's successive metamorphosis from criminal, to esthete, to poet. A study of the two works shows striking resemblances between Goetz and Sartre's Genet. Simone de Bauvoir has enumerated some of the themes common to both works : "the same themes are to be found in both—Good, evil, holiness, alienation, the demonic—and Goetz, like Genet, is a bastard, bastardy being a symbol of the vital contradiction. Sartre had experienced between his bourgeois birth and his intellectual choice."[113]

(ii) The Victors

Due emphasis has been laid upon extreme situation : torture. Sartre writes in *What is Literature* ? : "It is neither our fault nor our merit if we lived in a time when torture was a daily fact. Chateaubriant, Oradour, the Rue des Saussaies, Tulle, Dachau, and Auschwitz have all demonstrated to us that Evil is not an appearance, that knowing its cause does not dispel it... Therefore, inspite of ourselves, we came to this conclusion, which will seem shocking to lofty souls : Evil cannot be redeemed."[114] Simone de Beauvoir describes the state of mind in which Sartre wrote The Victors : "He had thought a great deal about torture for four whole years; alone, and among friends, we asked ourselves : Am I sure I would not talk ? How do you manage to hold one ? All these thoughts that haunted him, he threw into his play."[115] What helps Sartre in Dirty Hands greatly hinders him in The Victors. As Philip Thody puts it, "The willing suspense of disbelief on the part of the audience collapses at the sight of one man pretending to torture another."[116] The play is full of senses which so shocks the

113. Simone de Beauvoir : Force of Circumstance, p. 242.
114. Sartre : What is Literature ? p. 211.
115. Simone de Beauvoir : Force of Circumstance, p. 112.
116. Philip Thody : Jean-Paul Sartre : A Literary and Political Study, p. 86.

senses that the mind is no longer able to function meaningfully.

(iii) Dirty Hands

Hugo represents for Sartre an exemplary hero. Sartre writes in Saint Genet : "What is important is not what people make of us but what we ourselves make of what they have made of us."[117] Critics of Sartre have interpreted Hugo's suicide at the end of Dirty Hands as a last heroic act. Harold Hobson, for instance, assets : "M. Sartre undoubtedly intended Dirty Hands to end with a flourish, and on a note of triumph... It cannot be questioned that Sartre considers that Hugo won a spiritual victory."[118] Hugo wants to believe that by suicide he can save his crime so that Hoederer will have died not by chance but for his ideas. He sees in suicide a means of giving his act—and himself—a reality which he has not been able to attain otherwise. "The man who commits suicide," Perken says to Claude in The Royal Way, "is running after an image of him-self : You never kill yourself except in order to exist."[119]

(iv) Thd Respectable Prostitute

Henry Peyre, discussing the frequent misinterpretation of Sartre's intentions, comments : "Americans...have resisted in seeing (in La Putain respectueuse) a crude treatment of the Negro problem. Sartre intended nothing of the kind. The prostitute, Lizzie, and the innocent Negro are, in the eyes of the author, the true villains of the play. They bow to prejudices through sentimentality, inadequate intellectual force, and the same fear of freedom that crushed Electra's early passionate revolt in Les Mouches."[120] Sartre does not even give his Negro

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117. Sartre : Saint Genet, p. 49.
118. Harold Hobson : The French Theatre of To-day : An English View, p. 107.
119. Andre Malraux : The Royal Way (New York, Random House, 1955), p. 12.
120. Henri Peyre : "Existentialism and French Literature : Jean-Paul Sartre's Novels", in the Contemporary French Novel, p. 228.

a name. He is simply "The Negro"—nothing more than a victim. Even his mind has been violated, he has become the "nigger" his oppressors have made of him to justify their oppression. Sartre writes in Saint Genet : "The Indian untouchable thinks that he is *actually* untouchable. He internalizes the prohibition of which he is the object, and makes of it an inner principle which justifies and explains the conduct of the other Hindu towards him."[121] In accepting himself as inferior, the Negro endows whites with magical superiority with which they have already endowed themselves. Although he is to be sacrificed for a guilty white man, the old Negro of The Respectable Prostitute does not even think of rebelling.

(v) Nekrassor

The plot of Sartre's Satiric farce Nekrassor is in one of the oldest traditions of French comedy, going back to the medieval Farce de Pathelic. Satiric declares : "My play is openly a satire on the procedures of anti-communist propaganda. To-day when there is protest for international entente, systematic anti-communism is, in effect, one of the brakes which attempts to slow down this movement, by means of procedures which are most often fallaciousness or arbitrary. It is these procedures, these propaganda, this hysteria that "I wanted to mock in Nekrassor."[122] The Satric thrust of the entire play is political rather than moral; that is, Sartre treats his characters not as moral agents but as a products of their society. Barthes concludes his " Nekrassor juge de sa critique" as follows : "I console myself with the thought that Nekrassor will liberate each evening, for as long as possible, Frenchman like me who are suffocating under the bourgeois sickness. "J' ai mal ā la France", Michelet used to say. That's why Nekrassor did me good."[123] The real target in Nekrassor is not an

121. Sartre : Saint Genet, p. 34.
122. Sartre : Liberation, June 7, 1955.
123. Theatre Populaire, XIV (July 1955).

individual or a number of individuals but the system that created them.

(vi) Kean

Kean lives a double imposture as the truth of his adult life; his public and private lives. For the pleasure of his audience Kean has transformed himself into an actor. Sartre describes Kean in the same terms as he earlier described Genet : "It was you who took an infant and turned him into a monster."[124] Francis Jeanson compares Genet and Kean as "monsters", both created by society for its own purposes : Genet the thief, had been changed into a monster for purposes of edification, Kean, the actor, for purposes of entertainment—in both cases, for reasons of social usefulness. One is transformed into a Scapegoat; at his expense serious people divert themselves : through him, they accede magically to heroism and grandeur, or sometimes they care Evil as one dreams of suicide, in all reality, in all innocence."[125]

(vii) No Exit

What makes No Exit a masterpiece is that Sartre is able to translate philosophy into a dramatic form. Francis Jeanson describes No Exit as "a kind of ontological tragedy in which one of the essential components of our condition has been isolated from context and carried mythically to its limit."[126] The three characters are configured according to a certain vision of life that is realized with both intensity and formal completeness. Examining the nature of Sartre's power in his best lite-

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124. Cf. Saint Genet, p. 23 : "They took a child and made a monster out of him for reasons of social utility.'

125. Francis Jeanson : Sartre par lui men, p. 77. quoted in The Theatre of Sartre, op. cit., p. 101.

126. Francis Jeanson : "Le Theatre de Sartre, Ou les Hommes en proie a 1, homme", Livres de France, XVII, 1 (January 1966), 9.

rary creations, Gaetan Picon writes in his essay on Sartre's novels : "Sartre's greatness is that he has a universe to reveal to us. Not this universe but his universe : a universe which he translates, as others do, through fiction with the help of a certain number of unforgetful obsessions. There is a world of Sartre as there is a world of Kafka, a world of Faulkner, and it is this world which holds us in its power."[127] Iris Murdoch reminds us that "Sartre, like Freud, finds in the abnormal the exaggerated forms of normality."[128] The three characters of No Exit have botched their lives, and their lives are now finished. If existence precedes essence, they have become their essence. For all three of them, that essence is a form of failure. The characters of No Exit are identified by a past over which they have no control; it has become their destiny. It is with this dimension of death—death after life and death in life—that Garcin's final discovery reaches its full significance. "Hell is other people", is the central truth of No Exit. It is important to remember, however, that within Sartre's philosophy that formula has a limited and specific meaning. Sartre has emphasised this point : "The only valid relationship is with other people. That can go even to hell. In order for it is not to be hell, praxis must exit. The characters of No Exit are in a passive, changeless situation in which each of them is inevitably fixed in his essence by the others."[129]

(viii) Franz and The Condemned of Altona

The central fact about Franz and The Condemned of Altona is torture. To say that a man is what he does is meaningful only if it includes an awareness of the complexity involved in every act : "The fact is that an act can no more be reduced to what it is than can a man : it transcends itself. What moves us in Franz is the constant strain he experienced as he lives out

127. Geatan Pican : Panorma de la nouvelle litterature francaise", p. 109.
128. Iris Murdoch : Sartre—Romantic Rationalist, p. 17.
129. Interview with Sartre, January 7, 1964.

the suffering of his century : he exists for us both as the man who has tortured and as the man who is tortured. The executor is also victim. All his life he has been possessed : first by his father, then by Hitler, now by his memories. To accept himself is impossible. Simone de Beauvoir has written of Sartre and herself : "One of our inconsistencies was our refusal to accept the idea of the subconscious. Yet Gide, the surrealists, and despite our resistance, Freud himself had all convinced us that in every person there lurks what Andre Breton called *un infracassable noyan de unit,* an indestructible kernel of darkness, something that...does, now and then, brust out in a peculiarly scandalous fashion."[130]

The Impossible God

Sartre presents several detailed arguments to prove that the idea of God is self-contradictory and therefore impossible. Sartre argues that if man in his inner being is not dependent on God, then he has no "need" for a creation. "If creation is an original act and if I am shut up against God, then nothing any longer guarantees my existence to God; he is now united to me only by a relation of exteriority, as the sculptor is related to the finished statue..."[131] It is no solution to say that God has bestowed upon man an essence, and freedom to act accordingly. Finally, Sartre considers the argument that God could be considered to choose our essence, while leaving us free by determining the time of our death and thus depriving us of any further opportunity. The experience of "Nausea" is the experience of the world when objects have no role or function, but exist by themselves in a meaningless plenitude. "Every existent is born without reason, remains through weakness and died by chance." In such a world the idea of God, also, is meaningless.

Turning to Sartre's view of the social and political function

130. Simone de Beavoir : The Prime of Life, p. 107.
131. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 232.

of intentionalized religion we find that it is congruent with his description of individual religious experience. As God is the ally of Daniel in his attempt to smother his freedom, so Jupiter in The Flies appears as the ally of a tyrant who fears the freedom of others :

Jupiter : ...the same secret weighs heavily on our hearts.

Egisthe : —I have no secret.

Jupiter : —Yes, The same as I. The unhappy secret of Gods and Kings : it is that men are free. They are free, Egisthe. You know it, and they don't know it.

Egisthe : —Heavens, if they know it they would set fire to the four corners of my palace. For fifteen years I have put on an act to hide their power from them...who am I, if not the free that the others have of me ?

Jupiter : —For a hundred thousand years I have danced before men ..They have to watch me, they forget to look into themselves."[132]

Catholic doctrine views the individual as having ready made tendencies to realise, while Sartre sees man as a problem. Sartre denies that he has developed a doctrine of human nature : "Atheist existentialism ..states that if God does not exist, there is at least one being in whom existence precedes essence, and that this being is man...there is no human nature, since there is no God to conceive it."[133] Sartre's position on the Catholic moral law has much in common with that of modern positivists. As regards the statements of value as meaningful only in terms of a subjective commitment. He has avoided embarrassing questions about the existence of God by relegating metaphysics, which tries to give a casual explanation of the world.[134] His arguments against the existence of God are "...

132. Translated from Jean-Paul Sartre : "Les Mouches. Theatre" (Paris, 1947), pp. 77-78.

133. Sartre . Existentialism, p. 18.

134. Norman N. Green : An Existentialist Ethics, p. 90.

just as strong as weak as Sartre's general ontology...He defines being-in-itself in a univocal and material way and then shows that being, as so defined, excludes consciousness and the other attributes usually applied to God. Clearly enough, the trouble lies in the doctrine of the In-itself..."[135]

David E. Roberts holds that the distinguishing characteristic of man is that he is never 'just what he is'. He is, of course, one who has a body, a job, a family, a nation; but he is able to stand apart from such characteristics by differentiating himself from every respect in which he is an item in the world. This is Sartre's version of man's capacity for self-transcendence, which some theologians take to be the cardial mark of creation in the Image of God and as evincing man's linkage with eternity. For Sartre, too, it is the source of man's uniqueness and freedom, but its primary effect is alienation from being and there is no "eternity with which it can be linked."[136] Sartre admits that he is not happy about having to face life without divine support, and he has no patience with philosophies that attempt to claim essential norms of honesty progress, justice, etc. He finds it "very distressing that God does not exist" because this means that everything can happen so far as man is concerned. "Man, with no support, and no aid, is condemned every moment to invent man."[137]

Obviously Sartre considers himself as an atheist. His atheism, has no self-sufficiency,.[138] The fundamental reason may well be that Sartre is afflicted with the presence of his terribly lonely For-itself, which wanders all over the cosmos and does not know where to anchor. More than any other philosopher,

135. James Collins : The Existentialists (Chicago, 1952), p. 66.

136. David E. Roberts : Existentialism and Religious Belief, p. 103.

137. Sartre . Existentialism (New York, Philosophical Library, 1947), p. 28.

138. Ibid., p. 16.

he has emphasised the extreme need of the Absolute, without, however, conceding the existence of an Absolute Being as a remedy to this obsession.[139] He is the pilgrim of the Absolute who never reaches the Absolute. "Human reality is a being which tries to be God,"[140] but deification or saturation by the divine is excluded. In one of his latter publications, this unrest seems to have increased. Sartre writes: "God is dead...Hegel tried to replace him with a system and the system foundered, Comte, by a religion of humanity, and positivism foundered... Everything in myself calls for God and that I cannot forget... As a matter of fact, this experience can be found in one form or another in most contemporary authors: it is the torment in Jaspers, death in Malraux, destruction in Heidegger, the reprieved being in Kafka, the insane and futile labour of Sisyphus in Camus."[141] Addressing a public meeting of the group "Maintenant" Sartre said, "Christian start from the postulate 'God exists', I set out from the postulate, 'God does not exist'."

The Concept of Death

Death in the view of Sartre is the last barrier of human life. Death is empirical fact. It is the last aspect of life. As a man has his personal life so he also faces his personal death. "It is meaningless that we were born, it is meaningless that we die."[142] The end of every human being resembles his life, because life is preparation for the end, as Sartre describes it, "not the empirical and contingent phenomenon of my demise, but the finite character of life makes my life as well as my death mine."[143] He further says: "death is my possibility... but the always possible nullification (neantisation) of what is

139. Wilfrid Desan : The Tragic Fenale, p. 179.
140. Sartre : E. N., p. 653.
141. Sartre : Situations, I (Paris, 1947), p. 153.
142. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 631.
143. Sartre : Etre et le Neant (Paris, Gallinard, 45th ed., 1955), p. 116.

possible for me, which is outside my possibilities," and if the day and hour of my death are not fixed by me, but are decided by "sequence of the universe", we cannot say that death confers a meaning, a sense to life, for meaning comes only from subjectivity itself. "Because death is not rooted in our freedom, it cannot but deprive life of all meaning."[144] Sartre concludes that "death is never that which gives meaning to life; it is, on the contrary, that which actually deprives life of all significance. If we have to die, our life has no sense because our problems do not receive any kind of solution and because the very meaning of the problems remains undetermined."[145]

Sartre draws clear-cut distinction between life and death. He concludes "Life decides about its own meaning, because it is always in 'abeyance'. It possesses the power of auto-criticism and of auto-metamorphosis, which allow it to be defined as a 'not-yet'. The dead life also does not stop changing, but it is 'done'. This signifies that for it, the game is over and it will undergo these changes without being any more responsible for them. Nothing can happen to enter it from the 'inside', it is completely closed and nothing can enter it any more, but its meaning does not cease being modified, albeit from the outside.'[146] In summing up, Sartre says that "we have to conclude, against Heidegger, that far from being my own possibility death is a contingent fact, which, as such, escapes me by principle...I cannot discover my death, nor wait for it, nor take an attitude toward it, for it is that which reveals itself as indiscoverable, that which disarms all expectations... Death is a pure fact, like birth; it comes to us from the outside. Basically it is undistinguishable from birth and it is this identity of birth and death which we call facticity."[147]

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144. Ibid., pp. 621-23.
145. Ibid., p. 624.
146. Ibid., pp. 628, 629.
147. Ibid. p. 630.

A Critical Estimate

Sartre likes to understand man as a person in the world in his total situation. There is, according to Sartre, a ceaseless and unavoidable conflict between man and the world. The individual experiences various types of contradictions, such as, the conflict between the incomplete sense of existence and inauthentic existence, etc. "His uniqueness consists in giving a phenomenological account of the dynamic and spontaneous development of human reality towards the ultimate possibility. This is something novel in the history of phenomenology, for here phenomenology is applied to the sphere of the dynamic activities of life. The idea of dynamic phenomenology is best illustrated in Sartre's conception of existential psycho-analysis.[148] Sartre's philosophy has a phenomenological justification for the development of two ontological entities from the unity in which both are related to each other. This is evident from Sartre's idea of being-in-the-world which Sartre borrows from Heidegger, represents the idea of '*lived* experience', comparable to Husserls' "Lebenswelt" and Merleu-Ponty's "lived reality". This idea of Sartre's is most clearly evident in his analysis of "situation" and man's experience of his body. In an interview with the New Left Review reprinted in New York Review of Books, Sartre says, "...The individual interiorizes his social determinations : he interiorizes the relations of production, the family of his childhood, the historical past, the contemporary institutions; and he then re-exteriorizes these in acts and options which necessarily refer us back to them. None of this existed in L'Etre et le Neant."[149]

Sartre makes distinction between 'Being-in-itself' and 'Being-for-itself', i. e., 'en-soi' and 'pour-soi'. The first can

148. Mrinal Kanti Bhadra : A Critical Study of Sartre's Ontology of Consciousness (The University of Burdwan, 1978). p. 21.
149. Sartre's interview in New York Review of Books, Vol. XIV, No. 6, March 26, 1970.

generally be associated with consciousness. Sartre believes that there is an opposition between these two kinds of being, i. e., between pure consciousness and rigid non-consciousness. Man always strives in vain towards their union. He constantly seeks but never finds. "This radical bipolarity is the crux of Sartre's doctrine."[150] Sartre was not an intellectual who sought refuge from action in the ivory tower of pure conception. On the contrary, his dialogue had only one commandment - "Commitment is an act, not a word." He was in many ways a paradox : a pessimist who believed in human corrigibility, an anti-idealist who championed the most idealistic causes, a Marxist, who was not a determinist, a visionary who gambled on man's short-sightedness. For all that and because of it, he was a promethean figure. To us he is no more a person but "a whole climate of opinion."[151]

Sartre's philosophy as much as that of Nietzsche expresses the terrifying experience of man's forlornness in a world without God.[152] Being hopeful of bright future, he says that everything can be arranged satisfactorily provided man realizes the strength of his freedom; "Before you are alive, life is nothing; it is up to you to give it a meaning, and value is nothing else but the meaning you choose."[153] Sartre makes use of his dogmatic assertion that "existence precedes essence." Man, he says, is "a being who exists before he can be defined by any concept...At first he is nothing. Only afterwards will he be something, and he himself will have made what he will be. Thus, there is no human nature, since there is no God to conceive it."[154] Sartre's relation to Heidegger is rather complex, but Heidegger himself has regularly attempted to ward off responsibility for this self-styled discipline. While

150. M. N. Sinha : Primer of Existentialism.
151. Ibid.
152. Kurt F. Reinhart : Existentialist Revolt, op. cit., p. 174.
153. Sartre . Existentialism, p. 58.
154. Ibid., p. 18.

in Heidegger's view, man is the witness, the servant, 'the shepherd' of Being; for Sartre man is the autonomous creator and master of Being. Man's absolute freedom knows of no obedience, no service, no humility. For Heidegger, the essence of truth is freedom. Sartre's postulatary atheism" demands that "God be dead", so that human freedom may be born. In Heidegger's philosophy freedom is governed in the truth of being. In Sartre's philosophy both being and freedom are grounded in nothingness. Heidegger is seeking a new approach to the truth of traditional Western metaphysics. Sartre offers his antimoralism and anti-theology as substitutes for Christian morality and religion.[155]

Emmanual Monier criticises Sartre on the following ground : he argues that since freedom is confined to the circle of subjectivity—to the condition of the pour-soi-it never goes beyond its own subjectivity to meet any real objective obstacles and that it is objectivity which truly defines freedom.[156] Monier's second point is that Sartre's concept of freedom leads to a form of idealism which excludes any meaning from the pour-soi.[157] The final criticism is that Sartre's concept of freedom leads to a paradoxical theory of responsibility.[158] The essence of Monier's three criticisms is that Sartre is expousing a form of idealism which, in isolating the pour-soi from the world and making of it a Nothingness, results in the failure of the pour-soi to attain those meaning which come only from real contact with the world. Freedom, meaning, and responsibility are categories applicable to the pour-soi only to the degree to which they face objective existence.[159] Mary Warnock, among others , has attached Sartre's "extreme belief in freedom." She

155. Kurt F. Reinhart : Existentialist Revolt: op. cit., p. 174.
156. Monier, Emmanual : Existential Philosophies, p. 103.
157. Ibid., pp. 103-104.
158. Ibid., p. 104.
159. Mauric Natason : A Critical Study of Jean-Paul Sartre, p. 75.

says that there is an enormous range of freedom for human beings, who cannot only do and feel as they choose but can "be whatever they choose."[160] There are several difficulties with Mrs Warnock's characterisation of Sartre's position. In the first place, if she is discussing the concept of freedom developed in Being and Nothingness which seems to be what she intended, then freedom to do what we choose is irrelevant. This, any way, seems to be the point of Sartre's claim that "slave in chains is as free as his master."[161] On the other hand, if Mrs. Warnock is discussing later versions of Sartre's theory of freedom, the freedom-to-do is relevant, but the range of feedom is highly restricted.[162]

According to Sartre's early theory; the point is that freedom-to-do is not what Sartre meant at that time by freedom. He did not claim that human beings are omnipotent, as Mrs. Warnock appears to maintain. On the other hand, Sartre did not mean freedom-to-do in the irrational manner required by an indeterminist position, in past, because it renders the particular action "absurd."[162] He spells out the point that when he speaks of freedom he does not mean a "capricious", unlawful, gratuitous, and incomprehensible contingency."[164] In opposition to the interminist Sartre claims that "to speak of an act without a cause is to speak of an act which would lack the intentional structure of every act."[165] For Sartre, our chosen ends operate as a kind of final cause. So our existence turns out to be what we freely choose to be, and is not grounded on any ideal essence. As Sartre argues the position almost to the

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160. Mary Warnock : The Philosophy of Sartre (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1965), p. 10.
161. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 550.
162. Sartre : "Materialism and Revolution", pp. 937-38.
163. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, p. 437.
164. Ibid., p. 453.
165, Ibid. p. 436-37.

point of absurdity : "Man first *is*—only afterwards he is this or that...man must create for himself his own essence."[166] Sartre remarks that the individual in choosing his own end, is 'forced to decide upon the meaning of existence both within himself and everywhere outside himself'. The statement that "man is condemned to be free", occurring repeatedly in Sartre's philosophical and literary works, harps on the same point. To elucidate the point further, in the words of Sartre himself : Condemned because he did not create himself, yet he is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is thrown into this world he is responsible for everything he does."[167] Professor Debabrata Sinha, a learned scholar in contemporary philosophy, has wisely evaluated existential approach towards life in these valuable words. "In the midst of the overall intellectualistic trend in modern scientific thought and philosophic movements, the existentialist thinker has rightly drawn our attention to a new dimension of reality, i. e., human existence. We certainty owe to Existentialism the valuable insight into the contingency of human existence. Moreover, in his unequivocal stress on human existence as something which cannot be grasped in term of conceptual analysis alone"..."At the cross-roads of contemporary thinking, the existentialist's (Heidegger and Sartre in particular) combination of the ontological standpoint with the recognition of the unique reality of human existence seems to open a new dimension of humanism—an ontological oriented humanism."[198] In view of this active self-assertion of the human reality which is basically without ground or reason, man has even been described by Sartre as 'a useless passion.'

166. Sartre in an article published in the French Journal, Action (Dec, 1944), quoted in Debabrata Sinha : Phenomenology...p. 1.

167. Vide : Existentialism and Humanism, p. 34.

168. Debabrata Sinha : op. cit., p. 148.

CHAPTER NINE

Friedrich Nietzsche

Foreground and Background in Nietzsche

At the close of his book "Existentialism and Humanism",[1] Sartre remarks that "Existentialism is nothing else but an attempt to draw the full conclusions from a consistently atheistic position." Nietzsche is really the first European philosopher in modern period who spells out what consistent atheism involves.[2] He raised slogans to sweep away the shibboleths behind which western man had been sheltering. In his visionary way Nietzsche saw behind the twilight period, in which he was living, a twilight not only of gods, but of man and of concepts, but he was able to gaze into future and see horizons which are perhaps denied to man like Sartre.[3] In Nietzsche's initial formulation Dionysos and Appollo are regarded as complementary to each other. It is in the name of Appollo that "We concentrate all those many illusions of beautiful phenomena which make life worth living at every moment of existence and urge on to the experience of the next.'[4] Nietzsche's own estimation of his book is that it was "an account of how the Greeks got rid of pessimism by what means they overcome it."[5] Pessimism is associated by Nietzsche with decadence. He finds in the ancient Greeks no evidence of a life-denying spirit, but rather an affirmative answer to life. This was not a purging of pity and fear, in the Aristotalian manner but a "going beyond"

1. J. P. Sartre : Existentialism and Humanism, p. 56.
2. Margarett Chatterji : The Existential Outlook, p. 22.
3. Ibid., p. 21.
4. Nietzsche : The Birth of Tragedy, Section 25.
5. Nietzsche : Vide his Ecce Homo, written in 1888.

pity and fear. "Like Rousseau, he wanted to rediscover the natural man, but unlike Rousseau, he wanted to do this without falling into sentimentality and without adopting the myth of human equality."[6]

In "Beyond Good and Evil", he writes, "The noble type of man regards himself as a determiner of values; he does not require to be approved of; he passes the judgement, 'what is injurious to one is injurious in itself'; he knows that it is he himself only who confers honour on things; he is a creator of values." The Will to Power concept substitutes dynamism in place of static Being, it substitutes man the creator for man the creature. "The final departure from Darwinism is contained in his belief in eternal recurrence. If life is autonomous and eternal, without beginning or end, involves in Nietzsche's view, not a linear progression towards an end, but a cyclical movement, involving endlessly recurring experiments."[8] The fluctuation and lop-sidedness in the destiny of modern man was something which Nietzsche experienced deeply. In this desire to shake off misery he is close to Buddha than to Dostoevsky, Like Freud he sees in the dream world a compensation for man's frustration.

The writers about Nietzsche who insist that the philosopher is not simply a destroyer, but expands a positive philosophy which is intended as an antidote to nihilism, are certainly justified. As Mr. R. J. Hollingdate puts it, "the recognition that all values had been disvalued, and that reality no longer had any intelligibility was the beginning of his (Nietzsche's) philosophy, its pre-supposition"[9], while the theories of the Will to Power, of Superman and of the Eternal Recurrence constituted

6. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 30.
7. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil, p. 260.
8. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 35.
9. R. J. Hollingdate : Nietzsche, The Man and His Philosophy, (Baton Rouge, 1965), pp. 310-311.

an attempt to "establish a new meaning for man and reality in a world become meaningless."[10] Further, the structure of Nietzsche's positive philosophy is open to criticism. Karl Jaspers claims that no system which we find in the philosopher's writings will reveal itself as a "complete, single and unambiguous whole."[11] And Mr. Danto says of Nietzsche's philosophy that "the system which I offer must be appreciated as a reconstruction to be understood as one must understand any theory; that is, as an instrument for unifying and explaining a domain of phenomena—in this case the domain of an individual's writing."[12] One of the differences between the interpretations of Nietzsche given by Hollingdate tells us that Nietzsche's mature philosophy, like Schopenhaur's, "is not metaphysical but materialistic,"[13] and that "not unlike he (Nietzsche) had metaphysics of any kind behind him did he enter into his own proper field."[14] Danto, however, speaks of the philosopher as "a metaphysician (who) sought to provide a picture of the world as it actually is,"[15] and he describes the idea of the Will to Power as "a metaphysical or, better an ontological concept."[16] Danto explicitly admits that when Nietzsches uses the term 'metaphysics', "he often has in mind only a philosophy that speaks of a reality which is higher and purer than one we are seemingly acquainted with through the senses."[17] In general, we may agree with Jaspers that though Nietzsche warns

10. Ibid., p. 173.
11. Karl Jaspers : Nietzsche : An Introduction to the Understanding of his Philosophical Activity, trans. Charles F. Wallraff & Friedrick J. Schnitz (Tucson, 1965).
12. Arthur, C. Danto : Nietzche as Philosopher (New York & London, 1965), pp. 25-26.
13. R. J. Hollingdate : op. cit., p. 84.
14. Ibid., p. 96.
15. Arthur C. Danto : op. cit., p. 195.
16. Ibid., p. 215.
17. Ibid., p. 81.

us against talking about the world as a whole as this is inaccessible to us, he then goes on to offer "his own exegesis of the world in its entirety."[18] And it seems that this exegesis can properly be described as metaphysical and would be mentioned as an example of what Mr. P. F. Strawson has called 'revisionary metaphysics'.

One of Danto's remarks is obviously relevant in the present context. "The claim that the world is valueless (wertlos) is not to say that it has some low value in the scheme of values, as when we say, of something, that it is of little or none, but rather, it is not the kind of thing of which it logically makes sense to say either that it is worth little, or that it has such and such a higher value. Values have no more application to the world than weights do to numbers."[19] Nietzsche calls upon man to set themselves a goal, namely Superman. This goal transcends the actual and, for this reason, becomes vague and nebulous.[20] When refering to the terms 'overman', which some commentators and translators have preferred to 'Superman', Danto remarks that if it is over—it is so in the sense of "over the hills and far away."[21] Any general assertion that Nietzsche is never satisfied with the actual, shows a singular degree of misunderstanding. For, who is more insistent than Nietzsche on affirming life and the world as they are ? Yes, but did Nietzsche really affirm life and the world 'as they are ? There is good deal to be said in favour of Crane Briston's observation that the great 'yea-sayer' spent most of his life saying 'No'.[22] After reading Beyond Good and Evil, Ervin Rohde remarked that Nietzsche was always promising "hair-raising audacities of thought, which then, to the bored disappointment of the

18. Jaspers : An Introduction to ... His Phil., p. 293.
19. Danto : op. cit., pp. 32-33.
20. Copleston : Philosophers and Philosophies, p. 126.
21. Danto : op. cit., p. 197.
22. Crane Briton : Nietzsche (Cambridge, Mass, & London, 1941) p. 17,

reader, never come."[23]

Meaning of the Earth

Kierkegaard is a philosopher of existence; Nietzsche is a philosopher of the world. Unlike Kierkegaard, Nietzsche does not believe that reflection is an action in which we engage rather it is an action that engages us : "A thought comes when "it" will and not when "I" will. It is thus a falsification of the evidence to say that the subject "I" conditions the predicate "think".[24] The turbulence in Nietzsche's thinking is itself a reflection of the turbulence of a world behind which stands the Will to Power : "And do you know what "the universe" is to my mind ?... This universe is a monster of energy, without beginning or end... a sea of forces storming and raging in itself, for ever changing..."[25] This powerful picture of the world conceived as energy in ceaseless ebb and flow is superimposed upon the metaphor of a cosmic will in Nietzsche's notion of the Will to Power. The metaphor of will as an ultimate reality seems to have been borrowed by Nietzsche from Arther Schopenhaur.[26] Moreover it is our earthly life that Nietzsche holds sacred. Unlike the Christian conception of existence in which life on earth is merely a path toward the future sacred existence, Nietzsche's conception holds that .. "existence is considered sacred enough to justify even a tremendous amount of suffering."[27] This is the tragic view of the existence : the proper view for man. And, indeed, it is for "...man alone, of all the animals that there are no *eternal* horizons or perspectives."[28]

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23. Quoted in R. J. Hollingdate, Nietzsche, The Man and His Philosophy, p. 208.
24. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil (C hicago : Henry Regnery Co., 1955), p. 18.
25. Nietzsche : Will to Power, II, p. 431.
26. See Arthur Schopenhaur, The Philosophy of Schopenhaur, ed., Edman (New York : Random House Inc., 1928).
27. Nietzsche : "Notes 1888", The Portable Nietzsche, p. 459.
28. Nietzsche : Joyful Wisdom, p. 180.

Nietzsche sees in the nineteenth century an event of *nihilism*, "the radical rejection of value, meaning and desirability."[29]

The Greeks, according to Nietzsche, knew very well that life is terrible, inexplicable, and dangerous. But, though they were alive to the real character of the world and of human life, they did not surrender to pessimism by turning their backs on life. What they did was to transmute the world and human life through the medium of art.[30]

The concept of God is hostile to life, And this is precisely Nietzsche's contention, which he expresses with increasing vehemence as time goes on. "The concept of God", he says in The Twilight of the Idols, "was up to now the greatest objection against existence."[31] And in The Anti-Christ, we read that "With God war was declared on Life, Nature and the Will to live ! God is the formula for every calumany against this world and for every lie concerning a beyond"![32] "This world," Nietzsche asserts, "is the Will to Power and nothing else".[33] He is never tired of attaching the distinction between 'this world, identified with merely phenomenal reality, and a transcendent reality which is really real'. The world is not an illusion. Nor does the Will to Power exist in a state of transcendence. The world is a unity, a process of becoming; and it is the Will to Power in the sense that this will is its intelligible character.[34] When treating on biological evolution, Nietzsche attacks Darwinism.[35] He points out that during most of the time taken up in the formation of a certain organ or quality, the inchoate organ is of no use to its possessor and cannot aid it in its struggle

29. Nietzsche : Will to Power, I. p. 5.
30. Copleston : History of Philosophy, Vol. 7. Modern Philosophy, p. 171.
31. Nietzsche : Werke, XVI, p. 43.
32. Nietzsche : Werke, XVI, p. 146.
33. Nietzsche : Werke, XV, p. 432.
34. Copleston : op. cit., p. 181.
35. Ibid., p. 185.

with external circumstances and foes. "The influence of external circumstances is absurdly overrated by Darwin. The existentialist factor in the vital process is precisely the tremendous power to shape and create forms from within, a power which uses and exploits the environment."[36]

Concept of Morality and Religion

Nietzsche agreed with Kant that morality was essentially a matter of laws.[37] It is only through the creation of and conformity to laws that civilization has been able to advance at all. He writes : "Every morality is, in opposition to *laisser aller*, a bit of tyranny against nature, even against reason",[38] and latter in the same work. "The remarkable fact is that whatsoever is of freedom, subtlety, daring, dance and firmness that is or ever was in the world, be it in thinking or ruling, in speaking or persuading, in art as in moral conduct, is made possible primarily by this 'tyranny of arbitrary rules'." Nietzsche says. "Moral values are delusive values compared with physiological ones."[39] Man's noblest endeavours are exposed as masks covering his animal instincts;[40] and nòble pity, allied almost without exception with envy, is only the way by which the weak can win power, "the power to hurt."[41] Nearly all the motives which we profess publically serve only to hide the real mainsprings of our action; "We shall seldom err when we ascribe extreme actions to victory, mediocre actions to habit, and petty ones to fear."[42] Belief means nothing, for it is only

36. Nietzsche : Werke, XV, p. 127r
37. Mary Warnock : Existentialism, p. 18.
38. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil.
39. Nietzsche : The Complete Works, ed. by Dr. Oscar Levy, Vol. 7, Human, All-too-Human, p. 43.
40. Paul Roubeizek : Existentialism For and Against.
41. Nietzsche : The Complete Works, op. cit., p. 50.
42. Ibid., p. 74.

"the adoption of guiding principles without reasons."[43]

Morality is more easily obeyed by a weak man than by a strong one who has vigorous instincts and urges, and if it is made the highest standard, the weak man appears to be the superior being. Thus all our morality is, seen as a 'slave morality', a 'morality of the herd, destined to break down the healthy man so that he may be subjugated. "The European disguises himself in morality, because he has become a sick, sickly, crippled animal who has good reasons, for being "tame", because he is almost an abortion, an imperfect, weak and clumsy thing."[44] Religion is a neurosis which produces and makes use of this illness. With Christianity, especially, begins "the slave-instruction in morals",[45] which has justified and won over all those who are 'misfits, the badly favoured, all the scum and the outcasts of mankind'. "Improvement in the Christian sense is the very opposite of real improvement, for it means that men are 'tamed, weakened, discouraged softened, unfeebled', Christianity crushed and broke man entirely and submerged him as in a slough of mud."[46] Only beyond 'good and evil' does real life begin. Pity for the weak is foolish. Slavery was always 'a condition of every higher culture',[47] and 'egoism is necessary if there are to be noble souls'. The man who develops culture looks different from the picture which Christians and moralists have of him. "He handles lies, violence, the most ruthless egotism as his tools with such mastery that he could only be called an evil and demonic being."[48]

43. Nietzsche : The Complete Works, Vol. 7, Human All-too-Human, p. 211.
44. Nietzsche : The Complete Works, Vol. 10, The Joyful Wisdom, p. 294.
45. Ibid., Vol. 5, Beyond Good and Evil, p. 117.
46. Nietzsche : Menschliches Allzumenschlickes, I, 114.
47. Nietzsche : The Complete Works, Vol. 5, p. 189.
48. Nietzsche : Menschliche Allzumenchliches, I, f. 241.

Forbearance and peace are enfeebling; war has to be accepted as something positive, or "war is the father of all good."[49] The "more complete man" are always the "more complete beasts."[50]

His genius lies in presenting a glorious record of "Revaluation of all values". One of the most revealing characteristics of the "revaluation" occurs in Ecce Homo : "After the Yes-saying part of my task had been solved, the turn had come for the No-saying, No-doing part : the revaluation of our values so far, the great war-conjuring up a day of decision. This included the slow search for those related to me, those who, prompted by strength, would offer me their hands for destroying."[51] In other words, the "revaluation" means a war against accepted valuations, not the creation of new ones. Later in Ecce Homo, Nietzsche elaborates : "Revaluation of all values : that is my formula for the act of ultimate self-examination by mankind which in me has become flash and genius. My lot is that I must be the first *decent* human being, that I know myself to be in opposition against the mendaciousness of millennia."[52] All morality, in fact, is coloured and modified by opportunism, even when its basic principles are held sacred and kept more or less intact. The thing that is a sin in one age becomes a virtue in the next..."Many lands did I see", says Zarathustra, "and many peoples, and so I discovered the good and bad of many peoples...Much that was regarded as good by one people was held in scorn and contempt by another. I found many things called bad here and adorned with people honours them... A catalogue of blessing is posted up for every people. Lo ! it is the catalogue of their triumphs—the voice of their will to power !...Whatever enables them to rob and conquer and dazzle, to the dismay and every of their neighbours, is regarded

49. Nietzsche : Die frohliche Wissenschaft, 92.
50. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil, p. 224.
51. Nietzsche : Ecce Homo, J. I.
52. Ibid., IV, I.

by them as the summit, the herd, the standard of all things... verily men have made for themselves all their good and bad."[53]

Philosophical Psychology

Nietzsche considered himself a pioneer psychologist, a first explorer of "the great forest and primeval wilderness of the human mind."[54] Nietzsche was not a philosophical determinist. He insists that the idea of cause and effect, useful enough in practice, "should not be objectified the way the natural scientist does...in conformity to the reigning mechanistic doltishness."[55] Cause and effect would then be another fiction unrecognised as such and take for true. Properly, it has a use "for the purposes of communication and understanding," *not* explanation : "In reality *an sich,* there are no causal ties, no necessities, no psychological unfreedom. There is no following of effect upon cause, there reigns no "law". We alone have invested the causes, the continuities, the connections, the relativity, the coercion, the numbers, the laws, the freedom, the grounds, the purposes. So if we impose the conventional world (Zeichenwelt) onto, and mix it up with the *an sich,* we tend, as we have always tended, to mythologize."[56] We must, he says in an unpublished note, "Put away...two popular concepts, Necessity and Law. The first imposes a false coercion (Zwang), the second a false freedom on the world. 'Things' do not have themselves in conformity to law or with regularity."[57]

Nietzsche is exclusively preoccupied with the natural history of mental concepts : his psychology is often concerned with the natural history of mental facts. Philosophers, such as Descartes, for example, frequently begin their inquiries with introspective accounts, but Nietzsche finds the phenomenon of introspection,

53. Nietzsche : Thus Spake Zarathustra, I.
54. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil, p. 45.
55. Ibid., p. 21.
56. Ibid.
57. Nietzsche : Nathlass, 776.

and our capacity not merely for having thoughts but for being aware that we have them, altogether puzzling matters. It is true that we have this awareness, at least sometimes, but what purpose does it solve ? "It first becomes a problem for us when we begin to appreciate the degree in which it is dispensable."[58] For our mental life, introspectively revealed, might have gone on just as it does go on, only we might not have been conscious of its going on : "We could think, feel, will, remember; we could likewise 'act' in every sense of the term, and yet none of this need even have 'come into consciousness' (to put it metaphorically)".[59]

"Life itself is essentially appropriation, injuring, over-powering the alien and the weak. It is oppression, hardness, imposing one's form...Life just is will-to-power...imposing one's form... Appropriation does not simply belong to perverse or imperfect or primitive society : it belongs in essence to living thing, as a basic organic function. It is a consequence of the Will-to-Power which is but the Will-to-life".[60] Will-to-power is a central, organizing concept in Nietzsche. It is not to be identified with *conatus,* i. e., a tendency on the part of each thing, to retain its integrity : "Self-preservation is merely an indirect and frequent *Consequence* of this "[61] It was for this reason, incidently, that he polemicized against Darwin, his thesis being that we don't struggle, so to speak, to maintain a marginal existence, save in exceptional circumstances : life is not to struggle to survive but to prevail, and "the general aspect of life is neither need nor starvation, but far from richness and profusion...Where there is struggle, it is struggle for power."[62] Nietzsche contends that the strong are, at best, rare and untypical : "Mankind, like every other type of animal, produces a surplus of the abortive, diseased, degenerate, feeble,

58. Nietzsche : The Gay Science, 354.
59. Ibid.
60. Nietzsche : p. 60.
61. Ibid., p. 13.
62. Nietzsche : Twilight of the Idols, IX, 14.

and the necessarily suffering : the successful instances are the exceptions among men."[63]

Godless Theology

Nietzsche speaks of the God frequently in his writing but nowhere more clearly than in Joyful Wisdom in which a madman runs into the market-place, calling "seek God ! I seek God !" God is gone because he and the spectators there in the market-place have killed Him. This murder of God is not without its cosmic consequences. Where does the earth move now ? Where do we move if not in a directionless space, an "infinite nothingness" which now becomes colder and darker ? Yet the murdering of God is an occasion for awe, certainly a deed of too great a magnitude for mere man to have to become Gods, merely to sum worthy of it ? There never was a greater event and on worthy of it, all who are born after us belong to a higher history than any history hitherto !"[64] This powerful passage depicts the decay, not of the institution of Christianity—for perhaps symbolically, the madman does leave the market-place and enters various Churches to recite a requiem—but of the orientation in values and morals which have traditionally been derived from Christianity.[65]

Nietzsche's overman is a person who has become God-like by murdering God; that he is the person who not only chooses between good and evil, but who himself establishes new values and affirms the significance of life in so doing, just as the God of the Old Testament established commendments. But, whereas, according to Nietzsche, the commandments of God constituted a denial of life,[66] those of the overman are an affirmation of life. The overman is one who seeks to overcome, to achieve,

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63. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil, p. 62.
64. Nietzsche : Joyful Wisdom, p. 168.
65. Fernando Molina : Existentialism as Philosophy, p. 25.
66. Nietzsche : Friedrich Nietzsche : The Anti-Christ, in The Portable Nietzsche, pp. 594-595.

what he is to be—"...the new, the unique, the incomparable, making laws for ourselves and creating ourselves."[67]

The structure of any genuine theology is reversed : instead of a relative personal effort being 'justified' by an absolute end, an existential effort is made absolute as to 'justify' a relative end. Christian theology is replaced by the penitential theology of a Godless universe.[68] After the declaration that 'the goal of mankind cannot lie in its end but in its highest specimen's (1874), he goes on to exhort his contemporaries : "...find an exalted and noble *raison ditre* in life : seek out destruction for its own sake ! I know of no better purpose in life than to be destroyed by that which is great and impossible ![69]

Zarathustra is the founder of earliest dualistic Aryan religion who knows—"he who first saw that the moving wheel at the centre of all things is the battle of good and evil'[70]—and therefore shall be the prophet who proclaims the end of the rule of good and evil. After ten years in mountainous solitude Zarathustra decides to go down among men : but when he came into the forest, suddently there stood before him an old man who had left his holy abode to look for roots in the world... "God is dead ?"[71] This 'death' of Christian God Nietzsche identifies with the virtuous end of the morality of good and evil, and of all forms of idealism. It is for him the cardial events of modern history and of the contemporary world, the ghost that looms behind his every important thought.[72] All that Nietzsche attacks is formulated in one of Kafka's 'Meditation'. "Nothing exists but the spiritual world. That which we call the sensuous world is the evil in the spiritual".

67. Nietzsche : Joyful Wisdom, p. 263.
68. J. P. Stern : Nietzsche, p. 90.
69. Nietzsche : Thoughts out of Season, II, 5.
70. Nietzsche : Ecce Homo, Last Section.
71. Nietzsche : Zarathustra, Introduction.
72. J. P. Stern : Nietzsche, p. 92.

Nietzsche calls the end of religion 'the most terrible news' : rather than cope with the 'unbearable loneliness' of their condition (he writes there), men will seek out their shattered God, and for His sake they will love the very serpents that dwell among His ruins...[73] The denigration of man's life on this earth and the subordination of man to God are Nietzsche's too principal objections to Christianity. The third is his attack on Christianity as scripture and dogma, and on the church as an institutionalization of that dogma.[74] Christianity now appears as the denial of all truth, instinctive and scientific alike. It is seen as a direct descendent of the Jewish theoretic state at first a threat to the life of a small, deeply unheroic nation, and then a powerful weapon in that national lethal struggle against Rome. It is a diseased barbarism that sets itself up as power,[75] a falsification of everything Christ was and stood for, and the very opposite of 'the Evangel', 'the good tidings.' Its history Nietzsche sees as a series of ever cruder misunderstandings of an original lofty symbolism : "the very word "Christianity" is a misunderstanding—the truth is,'there was only one Christian and he died on the cross', and 'from that moment on' all is lies..."[76]

What Nietzsche is trying to put into words is "a vision of a world such *specie aeterni*—the world as a self-contained, deeply meaningless whole. Neitzsche's consistent preference is clear : he is always for the single man against the herd, for genius against justice, for grace against deserts; he favours inspiration against the rule of rules and professional competence, and the heroic in every form against all this is 'human, all-too-human.'[77]" Perhaps it is misleading to speak as though Nietzsche presented

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73. Nietzsche : 'Serpents' : Mus. XVI, p. 80.
74. Nietzsche : The Anti-Christ.
75. J. P. Stern : op. cit., p. 98.
76. Ibid. p. 99.
77. Ibid., p. 115.

an actual 'picture' of this or that society, real or utopian—his sketches are never detailed enough for that which he does is to offer certain moral and ethical exhortations.[78]

Aesthetic Reinterpretation

Nietzsche is not prepared to consider a work of art as independent of the character of its creator, the aesthetic mode can never be made independent of the moral. From first ('Lest the bow should snap, there is Art,)[79] to last ('we have art lest we should perish of the truth')[80] the aesthetic is to be in the service of life...can it also act as a redemption from life ? Nietzsche is seeking a corner of the world—but with him it can never be less than a total view of the world—that would be free from all guilt and feeling of guilt : "It would be terrible if we still believed in sin : no, whatever we shall do, in countless repetitions, it will be innocent. There is no guilt if the thought of the eternal recurrence does not overwhelm you, no merit if it does."[81]

In the high noon of Nietzsches thinking, the entire world and all that the people do in it is seen as a sort of game or play, a spectacle for the gods if there are any gods to watch it : "Around the hero everything turns into tragedy, around the demi-god everything turns into Satiric drama; and around God everything turns into-what ? May be the 'world'[82]"? The world's gravity and seriousness—its tragic dimension—is rendered weightless (as time is rendered endless in the idea of the 'eternal' recurrence)—weights, yet infinitely more memorable than it had ever been in its aesthetically unredeemed state.[83] Only in this form does the universe become what Nietzsche wants

78. Nietzsche : Thoughts Out of Season, II, 9.
79. Ibid., IV, 4.
80. Nietzsche : Will to Power. 822.
81. Nietzsche : Werke, V. 2, p. 394.
82. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil, 150.
83. J. P. Stern : Nietzsche, p. 129.

it to be : the worthy object of a limitless, total affirmation. And in this state of an aesthetic theodicy the eternal recurrence too, seen as an unending game or spectacle,[84] reccives its final 'justification'. The unconditioned assent to the single moment of happiness is identified with Dionysus, the god of chaos, fertility and the enhancement of life through the threat of death, and the world is celebrated as a dancing god, or again as a child.[85] Dionysus now becomes the name of that divinity which transcending any narrowly aesthetic idea, transforms and 'eternally justifies' the world of suffering; the Dionysus is that tragic mode of being and view of life whose source is not weakeness and decadence but 'an excess of force' and vitality[86]—'Dionysus versus the crucified' : there you have the antithesis. The difference is not in respect of their martyrdom but of its meaning. Life itself, its eternal fruitlessness and recurrence, involves torment, destruction, the will to annihilation'. In the other case suffering—'the crucified as the innocent one'—serves as an argument against this life and as a formula for its condemnation. Evidently, what it at issue is the problem of the meaning—Christian or tragic ?—of suffering. In the former case it is to be the way toward the holy being, in the latter, being itself is holy enough to justify an enormity of suffering...The god on the cross is a curse of life, pointing a redemption from life : Dionysus torn to pieces is a promise of life—it will be eternally reborn and return again from destruction.[87]

Life is never a concept but vision, a metaphor which embraces all kinds of being but is devalued when it is seen unheroically.[88] Was Heidegger right when he declared that Nietzsche was 'finis metaphhsicae' ? In Nietzsche's philosophy, as through its very form, a series of traditional metaphysical topics is

84. Nietzsche : Will to Power, 1066-7.
85. Ibid., 1039.
86. Nietzsche : Twilight of the Idols, X. 4.
87. Nietzsche : Will to Power, 1052.
88. J. P. Stern : Nietzsche, p. 138.

challenged and reduced problematic. Yet inspite of the form in which they appear, these topics are never wholly refuted; they remained implied in the terminology of the refutations. Nietzsches' ultimate intention was not to destroy metaphysics but to create a new, more timely system. Unfortunately, there is no Nietzschean revolution, but there is a new way of looking at the world—his world and ours—and a new style of describing it. Where then does he succeed? His failures are also his success. He understands and 'unmasks' the ethic of blame and praise, punishment and reward, and of the agony of conscience, better than any other thinker. Respecting the variety of life more than he respects the variety of man, he shows what it means to approach each moral—existential issue with a fresh mind. More than the work of any other philosopher, Nietzsche's work is experiment and hypothesis, not precept.[89]

Kierkegaard and Nietzsche—A Comparison

As an existentialist thinker in the manner of Kierkegaard Nietzsche valued more highly "how" than the "what" : more highly the subjectivity of the thinker than the objectivity of the "system", more highly the growth of human personality than the conceptual integrity of abstract thought.[90] Looking at man's historical reality, they both found something fundamentally wrong with human nature. "Man is something which must be overcome, the Christian, called for a restoration of the religious integrity of human existence, Nietzsche, the Napolean, damanded that man be de-Christianized, because he thought that it was Christianity which had brought about the corruption of human existence. The impact of Nihilism, he contends, has created a unique historical situation, making it possible to prepare the way for the "higher man" or the "Super man" of the future. But the emergence of the "new man" he expects not from Supernature, but from nature; more precisely, from man's

89. Ibid., p. 149.
90. Kurt F. Reinhart : Existentialist Revolt, p. 60.

praying instincts and urges and thus ultimately from the "Will-to-Power". This Will-to-Power manifests itself in two phases or stages : in the first it appears as Nihilism, while in the second it is "sublimated" into the will to create the "higher man". "Both find paradox of existence in the mysterious union of the temporal and eternal, of nature and spirit, of the subhuman and the suprahuman, but whereas Kierkegaard calls upon the power of the Absolute Divine spirit to raise into his suprahuman dimension, Nietzsche calls upon the forces of the earth of purely this-worldly nature to restore wholeness and haleness to human existence. Thus Nietzsche's "new man" is the divine beast of prey, "the blood beast" whose untamed power and beauty he sees enhanced by the admixture of spirit. For him the evolution must proceed in the moment of *Life* rather than in the sphere of abstract ideas; it must have its place in existence rather than in a realm of conceptualized essences."[91]

The Christian answer to human call for redemption was no longer acceptable to Nietzsche. The answer of Schopenhaur, on the other hand, he still accepted. According to Schopenhaur, the purpose of tragedy was "the presentation of the horrible aspects of life...It presents on the stage the nameless pain and grief of mankind, the triumph of iniquity, the mocking domination of chance, and the irretrievable fall of the just and the innocent. And in this lies a significant hint as to the actual condition of the world and of existence. Tragedy reveals the inner conflict of the will with itself a conflict which here, on the highest level of its objectivation manifests itself in the most frightful way."[92]

But, it must be asked : how does Nietzsche justify his contention that the philosopher, the artist, and the saint are the supreme specimens of man's "true nature" or his natural perfection ? As Walter A. Kaufmann points out, Nietzsche "accepted Darwin's doctrine concerning the lack of any cardinal

91. Ibid., p. 61.
92. Arthur Schopenhaur : The World as Will and Idea, I. 51.

distinction between man and animals as incontrovertible empirical fact, "but he "tried to counter this, deadly' gospel with the new. Nietzschean, assertion that man can rise above the beasts...There are certain pursuits which are super-animalic, and the man who engages in them as a truly *human* being and has a unique worth. The artist, saint, and philosopher are representatives of true humanity and culture."[93]

Supermen and Eternal Recurrence

The historical Zarathurtra (Zoroastsr) believed the world to be the scene of conflict between good and evil, Nietzsche's Zarathustra, of course, did not believe this. But since he was the first to make this fundamental error, he should, Nietzsche says, "be the first to rectify it."[92] This is his reason allegedly, for picking Zarathustra as the spokesman for his philosophy. Zarathustra announced the relativity of all values : "Many lands saw Zarathustra, and many peoples :

Thus he discovered the goods and evils of many peoples. No greater power did Zarathustra find on earth than good and evil...

Much that one people held good, another held to be scorn and disgrace : thus I found. Much I found named evil here which there was bedecked with royal honour...

Truly man gave themselves all their good and evil. Truely they took it not, they found it not, nor did it come to them as a voice from heaven ..Till now there were a thousand goals, for there were a thousand people. Only a yoke for the thousand necks is lacking, the one goal is lacking. Humankind has yet no goal."[95]

Zarathustra sees it as his task to provide this "one goal"

93. Walter A. Kaufmann : Nietzsche : Philosopher, Psychologist, Anti-Christ, (Princeton University Press, 1950), p. 149.
94. Nietzsche : Ecce Homo, "Warum Ich. ein Schicksal bin". 3.
95. Nietzsche : Zarathustra, 1 "Von Tausend und elnema Ziela".

for mankind, and the doctrine of the superman, is to serve this purpose. "Look : teach you the superman !", Zarathustra entones : "The superman is the meaning of the earth."[96]

The eternal recurrence idea, roughly, is that whatever is fact, happens, has happened infinitely many times and will re-happen an infinity of times, *exactly* in the same way in which it happens now. So, strictly speaking, there is really no "last" man but rather an infinity of last man. And, like the Superman, the doctrine of eternal recurrence is taught by Zarathustra. "You would say 'now I would vanish'. And "Now I am a nothing". Souls are mortal as bodies. But the knot of causes, in which I am tangled, returns again and creates me again. I belong myself to the causes of eternal recurrence. I am again with this sun, this earth, this eagle, this snake—not to know life or a better life or a similar life :

"I come eternally again to this same life, in what is greatest and what is smallest, and teach again the eternal recurrence of all things."[97]

Nietzsche, somewhat like St Paul, experienced an ecstatic vision while walking on a country road : in his case it was the vision of the "eternal recurrence", a vision wherein, "he saw the cosmos animated by an endless cyclical movement, composd of a finite number of eternally recurring elements."[98] Everything which exists is always in the process of becoming. This process is not an infinite succession of changing states; after countless ages have elapsed, everything returns to its original posture. This cyclic recurrence is eternal. "Everything dies, everything blossoms again; eternally runs of year of being...Everything parts, everything greets, every other thing again : eternally the ring of being remains faithful to itself... But is the path of eternity."[99]

96. Nietzsche : Zarathustra, "Vorrede", 3.
97. Nietzsche : Zarathustra, III, "Der Genesende".
98. Kurt F. Reinhardt : op. cit. p. 90.
99. Nietzsche : Zarathustra, Part III.

Nietzsche's position on the nature of man seems to lead him to a contradiction.[100] On the one hand, man is an historical existence, historically and socially conditioned; on the other hand, "no one *gives* man his qualities—neither God, nor society, nor his parents and ancestors, nor he himself...No one is responsible for his being there at all, for his being such-and-such, or for his being in these circumstances or in this environment."[101] Rose Pfeffer in "Eternal Recurrence in Nietzsche's Philosophy" claims that the concept is "a vital and essential unity in which the various aspects of Nietzsche's thought are synthesized." She denies that this was a cyclical theory which referred to fixed states, recurring in the identical way as they occurred an infinite number of times in the past. "It is my contention that Nietzsche's theory is not based upon the classical atomism which still prevailed in his time, but upon a dynamic energetic theory of explanation."[102] Here evidence seems valid. In his note, which she had evidently examined, Nietzsche had written that the ultimate constituents of the world were "quanta of energy", and thus energy displaced matter as the basic stuff of the universe. In short, Nietzsche was further ahead of his time than anyone realized, since he was *not* speaking of rigid particles. Rose Pfeffer says : "His concept of *Krafte* is in its dynamic qualities, close to the energy theories of contemporary physics. The universe becomes a field of force, a field of incessant activity."[103] She quotes Nietzsche himself : "The same quality of energy means something different on a different level of development...Everything

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100. Sorokin : Sociologism and Existentialism, p. 95.
101. Nietzsche : Twilight of The Idols, Kaufmann ed., p, 500. This Conception of man is reflected in Heidegger's analysis of the structure of the Dasein of man and in Sartre's saying that in this universe man is "de trop".
102. Rose Pfeffer : "Eternal Recurrence in Nietzsche's Philosophy, Review of Metaphysics. (December, 1965). pp. 276-300
103. Ibid., pp. 279-280.

has been here before innumerable times, in so far as the total field of energy (Gesamt lage der Krafte) always returns. Whether aside from this anything identical has existed, is entirely indemonstrable.[104]

This, of course, puts an entirely different complexion on the matter of "eternal recurrence". As Rose Pfeffer says, Nietzsche's principle of conservation does not, then, refer to a static, unchanging, fixed state. It "refers to the preservation of the 'field of energy', which contains within it the elements of change and activity, of tension and release, repulsion and attraction, destruction and creation."[105] This is in turn means that change and tension are not something outside of Being, but are parts of Being Itself. "Reality is no longer to be understood by pure reason, but is a reality which is lived, experienced, suffered. It is a reality based upon the fundamental concept of will power."[106] Rose Pfeffer again quotes Nietzsche in the Nachlass : "Not only constancy of energy, but the will to become stronger in each centre of energy as the only reality...It is a struggle between two elements unequal in power...In the smallest organism, energy is constantly formed and must be constantly released."[107] Her conclusion in this investigation is that the Will-to-Power is a "dynamic, creative force", and this force does not aim at goals external to itself. This was, of course, one of Shri Aurobindo's major objections to Nietzsche's philosophy : the idea of power applied externally. Instead, says Rose Pfeffer, the Will-to-Power "creates in the manner of the artist ...out of the inner need for balance and form. It creates from within and organizes the dialectical powers of its own being .."[108] Her conclusion, therefore, is that when interpreted

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104. Nietzsche : Werke, XVI, p. 115, XII, p. 51 (Ibid., p. 281).
105. Ibid., p. 282.
106. Ibid., p. 283.
107. Werke, "XVI, pp. 154, 110, XII, p. 148"—Ibid., pp. 280-281.
108. Ibid., pp. 286-287.

in this fashion, the Will-to-Power and eternal recurrence, in Nietzsche, are not in conflict but in unity. Moreover, the Will-to-Power, as a centre of energy, containing these forces of tension and release, of polarity and enhancement, leads to eternal recurrence. "It is this Gestantlage of the Will-to-Power in their inner striving which returns again and again in eternal recurrence."[109] And here, for purposes of the present writer's investigation, she claims that Nietzsche returned to Heraclitus. She sees three elements in Heraclitus' philosophy which serve as leitmotifs in Nietzsche's teaching in Thus Spake Zarathustra : "...life as eternal war, polarity, tension; life as becoming and flux; life as play, 'the world of Zeus'." And now we are immediately reminded of another Hindu concept, that of Līlā, the joyful play of Brahman. In this theory, the universe is evolved as a kind of "play"; there is no other reason for emanation or creation. Dr. Richard Beyer says, "His doctrine does not lack system but systematic presentation, which however also Socrates, a Leibnitze did not leave behind them."[110] Because of his variations of mood, it is not easy definitely to characterise it.[111] Prof. Zeigler speaks of him as a "metaphysically dissatisfied" man, and Dr. Mobius has a similar view.[117] It does not appear, however, that he was temperamentally melancholy: Mobius describes him rather as "sanguine choleric."[118] The idea of Eternal Recurrence is sometimes regarded as fanciful or mystical. Prof. Zeigler calls it "a phantastic hypothesis."[114]

109. Ibid., p. 287.
110. Dr. Richard Beyer : Nietzsches Versuch einer Umwerthung aller Werthe, pp. 34-5.
111. William Mackintire Salter : Nietzsche—The Thinker : A Study, p. 18.
112. Theobald Zeigler, Friedrich Nietzsche; P. J. Mobius, Nietzsche, p. 36.
113. Mobius : op. cit., p. 56; Cf. Nietzsche of Himself, Werke, XI, 382, 587.
114. Theobald Zeigler : op. cit., p. 133.

Prof. Riehl relegates it to the childhood of science; it cannot be proved or even made probable.[115] Even Dr. Dobson speaks of this "half mystic doctrine."[116] We know that a future life has sometimes been dreaded rather than welcomed—for example, among the Buddhists; and this would seem to be another instance. Mr. Henry L. Menchen pronounces Nietzsche's idea "the most hopeless idea, perhaps, even formulated by man."[117]

Christianity—A Reinterpretation

Nietzsche's astonishingly keen and fearless criticism of Christianity has probably sent forth wider ripples than any other stone he has heaved into the pool of philistine contentment.[118] "I condemn Christianity", it begins, "I bring against in the most terrible of accusations that ever an accuser put into words. It is to me the greatest of all imaginable corruptions...It has left nothing untouched by its depravity. It has made a worthlessness out of every value, a lie out of every truth, a sin out of everything straightforward, healthy and honest. Let everyone dare to speak to me of its humanitarian blessings ! To do away with pain and woe is contrary to its principles. It lives by pain and woe : it has created pain and woe in order to perpetuate itself. It invented the idea of original sin. It invented the equality of souls before God—that cover all the rancour of the useless and base...It has bred the art of self-violation—repugnance and contempt for all good and cleanly instincts...Parasitism is its praxis. It combats all good red-blood, all love and all hope for life, with its anaemic ideal of holiness. It sets up 'the other world' as a negation of every reality. The cross is the recalling post for a conspiracy against

115. Ibid., pp. 137-8.
116. Grace N. Dolson : The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche, p. 260.
117. Henry L. Menchen : The Philosophy of Nietzsche (2nd Ed.),
118. Ibid., p. 196.

health, beauty, well-being, courage, intellect, benevolence—against life itself..."This eternal accusation I shall write upon walls : I call Christianity the one great curse, the one great intrinsic depravity...for which no expedient is sufficiently poisonous, secret, subterrean, mean ! I call it the one immortal shame and blemish upon the human race !"[119]

His indictment of Christianity contains two chief counts. The first is the allegation that it is essentially untrue and unreasonable, and the second is the theory that it is degrading, He endeavoured to prove that it was based upon contradictions and absurdities that its dogmas were illogical and its precepts unworkable.[120]

Again Christianity holds that man is a mere creature of the deity's will, and yet insists that the individual be judged and punished for his acts. In other words, it tries to carry free will on the shoulder and determinism on the other. Those sects which have sought to remove it by an entire acceptance of determinism under the name of pre-destination, fatalism, have become bogged in hopeless morassses of unreason and dogmatism. It is a cardial doctrine of Presbyterianism, for instance, that "by the degree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life and others forcordained to everlasting death...without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions..."[121] In other words, no matter how faithfully one man tries to follow in the footprints of Christ, he may go to hell, and no matter how impiviously another sins, he may be foreordained for heaven. That such a belief makes all religion, faith and morality absurd is apparent. Christianity, says Nietzsche is more dangerous system of slave—morality the world has ever known. "It

119. Nietzsche : "Der Anti-Christ", 62.

120. Henry L. Menchen : op. cit., p. 129.

121. "The Constitution of the Presbyterrian Church in the United States", pp. 16 to 20 : Philadelphia, 1841.

has waged a deadly war-against the highest type of man. It has put a bar on all his fundamental instincts. It has distilled evil out of these instincts. It makes the strong and efficient man its typical outcast man. It has taken the part of the weak and the low; it has made an ideal out of its antagonism to the very instincts which tend to pressure life and well-being...It has taught man to regard their highest impulses as sinful—as temptations."[122] In a word, it tends to rob mankind of all those qualities which fit any living organism to survive in the struggle for existence.

Nietzsche had a vast contempt for what he called "the green-grazing happiness of the herd." Its strong morality and its insistance upon the doctrine that whatever is, is right—that "God's in the heaven; all's well with the world",—revolted him. He held that the so-called rights of the masses had no justiable existence, since everything they asserted as a right was an assertion, more or less dignified of the doctrine that the uplift should survive. "There are", he said, "only three ways in which the masses appear to me to deserve a glance : first, as blurred copies of their betters, pointed on bad papers and from worn out plates; secondly, as a necessary opposition to stimulate the master-class, and, thirdly, as instrument in the hands of the master class. Further than this, I hand them over to statistics—and the devils."[123]

Historical Philosophising

God was an illusion indeed : but the name of God was a reality—and not only that, but far the most important reality : In the light of the discovery, Nietzsche's frustration and loneliness became insignia of election.[124] He was one of those who,

122. Nietzsche : "Der Anti-Christ", 5.
123. Nietzsche : "Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Lahen".
124. F. A. Lea : The Tragic Philosopher—A Study of Friedrich Nietzsche, pp. 20-21

in Schopenhaur's words—"on account of their higher intellectual power are made susceptible of far greater suffering than duller minds can ever feel, and are also placed in lonely isolation by a nature, which is obviously different from that of others".

The Humanist

Nietzsche holds that the world did not move forward of its own momentum towards some divine consummation; if the writings of any sovereign power could be traced at all great historical process, it was the power, not of God, but of human self-interest—"So far as there are laws in history, the laws are of no value, and the history of no value either".[125] Yet such was the fatal optimism, or optimistic fatalism, implanted by this ideology that it was not yet the range of modern man to dispense with the Idea in theory and continue to cling to it in practice. It was not, he affirmed, for the genius to adjust himself to society, but for society to adjust itself to the genius—and the quickly too, if it was to be saved from utter degradation. To the idealisation of the real, he opposed the realisation of an ideal; and to all the cowardly or unscrupulous opportunism dignified by the name of "submission to historical necessity", a summons to swim against the current—for "You will find that the virtuous man will always rise against the blind force of facts, the tyranny of the actual, and submit himself to laws that are not the laws of fickle history."[126] Must life dominate knowledge, or knowledge life ? which of the two is the higher, and decisive power ?[127] That was the question with which, in one form after another, Nietzsche strove to confront his contemporaries. His own answer, of course, was clear and emphatic. A genuine culture could only be the expression of "complete, mature, harmonious personalities".[128] It was not

125. Nietzsche : Thoughts Out of Season : II, 9.
126. Ibid., II, 8.
127. Ibid., II, 10.
128. Ibid., II, 7.

science, but the abuse of science, that Nietzsche attacked—its advancement at the expense of man. In this respect, he was a typical romantic. 'It is necessary, not to destroy, but to subordinate science'.[129] Gothe, he observes, was alive to this use, demanding that 'science should only influence the world by way of a nobler ideal of action'[130] and believed Nietzsche's ideal of the complete, mature, harmonious personality, it is constantly Gothe whom we glimpse.

The Conquest of Nihilism

Nietzsche always spoke of himself as an atheist. He never used the 'agnostic'—and knew nothing of purely theoretical problems. His philosophy was something to be lived : and agnosticism however plausible in theory, is impossible to put into practice.[131] Nietzsche, however, had submitted to the Critique of Pure Reason ; and while he could not, with Kant, 'erect the cross on the appalling background of the impossibility of knowledge'[132]; resolved as he was to 'distrust of anything and everything'[133] he adopted not only a Materialist view of Idealism, but an Idealist view of Materialism.

The Visionary

The Joyful Wisdom, as he said, is "really nothing but a revel of after long privation and impotence; the frolicking of returning energy, of newly awakened belief in a tomorrow and after-tomorrow; of sudden sentience and prescience of a future, of near adventures, of seas open once more and aims once more permitted and believed in."[134] The whole purpose of joy-

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129. Nietzsche's Works, X, 114, published by C. G. Naumann (Later by A. Kroner, Leipzig).
130. Nietzsche : Thoughts Out of Season, II. 7.
131. F. A. Lea : op. cit., p. 171.
132. Nietzsche : Human All Too-Human, II, 8.
133. Ibid., III, 213.
134. Nietzsche : The Joyful Wisdom, I.

ful wisdom is just to proclaim Nietzsche's liberation. The conscience which demands that a man become what he is, is 'higher self' of Thoughts Out of Season, the 'organizing idea'. The task of 'transvaluing values' which Nietzsche saw as his own, was nothing other than to declare this : to declare whatever made for health to be 'good', whether nihitated against it, 'bad'. Nietzsche's charge against contemporary morality is that it sets the real of its approval on all those sentiments, impulses and actions which make for the comfort, security and prosperity of society, never doubting that these constitute the highest good. He called it, for this reason, 'herd morality', and believed it to be at once a cause and symptom of that bourgois industrial civilization which, in general, is "the vulgarest mode of existence that has ever been."[135]

His "criticism of all pessimism down to the present day" has in effect, ended by making it look like optimism : "books that are written against life are strong means of attraction of life."[136] Schopenhaur denied life in the name of morality : Nietzsche denied morality in the name of life : and "this pessimism of strength issues also in a theodicy, that is to say in a total Yea-saying to the world."[137] Far from extenuating this now, therefore, he glorifies it : no longer the most expression, "it is all *only* subjective," "it is all our work ! let us be proud of it."[138]

Nietzsche experienced in his own person that life was suffering and pain. Torturing headaches, recurring blindness, loneliness plagued him incessantly. He confesses in one of his letters : "My existence is a terrible burden. I would have thrown it away long ago, if I had not made the most enlightening tests

135. Ibid., p. 40.
136. Nietzsche : Human All-Too-Human, II, p. 16.
137. Nietzsche : The Will to Power, 1019.
138. Ibid., 1059.

and experiments in the spiritual and moral domain, precisely in this state of suffering."[139]

The Prophet

Nietzsche's task is not to prescribe the conditions, but simply to proclaim the goal, that 'noble ideal of action' to which, he had always maintained, Why it is, then, that Marx has had such titantic effect, whilst Nietzsche, still rests in comparative obscurity ? There are many reasons, but one, and by no means the least important...Marx was swimming with current and he knew which way history was going and went with it. Nietzsche, on the contrary, who also knew which way history was going, for that very reason swam against it with all his might. It was going in the direction of the Last Man : "...For many noble ones are needed, and many kinds of noble ones, for a nobility ! or, as I once said in parable : That is just divinity that there are Gods, but no God."[140] In actual experience the joy of this self-transcendence is such that we cannot help affirming the universe : "for nothing exists for itself alone, either in ourselves or in things; and if our soul has left once violated and resounded as a chord for joy, all the eternities have conspired to bring this about—and in this single moment and eternity finds itself approved, redeemed, justified, affirmed."[141]

"Religious life is declining", he writes, "and man is learning to regard himself as ephemeral exercise so much effort in striving or enduring"[142]; the result is a vulgar hedonism. Without destracting our attention from the things of this world, the idea of Recurrence would yet enable us "to stamp the impress of eternity upon our lives."[143] It would solve, in short, the problem which the late George Orwell likewise regarded as

139. Nietzsc heis Werke, XIX, p. 352.
140. Nietzsche : Zarathustra, 56, II.
141. Nietzsche : The Will to Power, 1032
142. Nietzsche : Notes on Eternal Recurrence, 26.
143. Ibid., p. 35.

crucial : 'how to restore the religious attitude while accepting death as final'. "My doctrine is this : Live so that thou mayest desire to live again,—that is the task,—for in any case thou wilt live again !"[144]

The overwhelming impression he leaves behind is an impression of intellectual energy. To read him is exhilarating for the adventure of sharing the reflective force manifest in almost every formulation and a new thrust at a problem. Nietzsche is essentially a modern kind of truthfulness.[145] Explaining the world as a fragmented thing, he conveys it as such; unmasking all notions of 'Being' as mere myths, he settles for 'reflections', notes, informal witness of discontinuous 'becoming'. In this sense, he seems more truthful—and more modern—man as Marx, who disguised the continuities of his thought by thrusting a system over them. At the beginning of this Human, All-Too-Human, Nietzsche writes in a spirit of criticism which reminds us of Marx : "Lack of historical sense is the hereditary defect of all philosophers...Many of them take man automatically as has most recently been shaped by the impression of a particular religion or even of particular *poptical* events...but everything (that is) has become (what it is), there are neither eternal facts nor indeed eternal varities. Therefore what is needed for now on is historical philosophising, and with it the virtue of modesty." And in a note written at the same time: what separates us from Kant, as from Plato and Leibnitz, is that we believe only in Becoming—in intellectual matters too; we are *historical* through and through ..The way Heraclitus and Epedocles thought is alive once more.[146]

Three Moral Experiments

His philosophical consciousness never comes to rest, is never reconciled to the restrictions of any one method, any

144. Ibid., 27.
145. J. P. Stern : Nietzsche, Second Edition, 1979, p. 52.
146. Nietzsche : Mus, XVI, p. 9.

one mode of enquiry, yet a discernible unity of some kind informs his philosophising. There is no system, yet there is a very distinct type of thinking. We may place the various moral experiments which are conducted in his writings under three headings, for each of which Hamlet provides an appropriate motto :[147]

(i) The problem of morality *versus* life : recalling Hamlet's remark to Rosencranty, "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."

(ii) The morality of the 'Will-to-Power' : recalling Polonius's advice, "This above all : to thine own self be true."

(iii) The morality of strenuous : recalling Hamlet's gibe to Ophelia. 'There was sometimes a paradox, but now time gives it proof.' This is not Nietzsche's own arrangement, nor is there a strict chronological sequence to these experiments, except that the first is mainly associated with the early, 'postivist' phase (up to Joyous Science of 1882) and the second is confined to the last four years. Only the second bears a label of Nietzsche's own divising, only the 'Will-to-Power' was ever intended by him as a systematic description and norm of human conduct. Nietzsche has no doubt : his insistance that only the generation of greatness matters is indeed "the most crucial point of his philosophy of history and theory of values—no less than the clue to his "aristocratic" ethics and his opposition to socialism and democracy."[148] To this 'evaluation of man' everything is a means and everything must be sacrificed. The 'ideal' of nobility is to be *realized*, his moral philosophy moves between the devil of recalcitrant of facts and the deep sea of an all-encompassing cosmology. He wants to be, a practical philosopher, yet he rebels against the tyranny of empiricism and "our dubious state of facts."[149]

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147. J. P. Stern : op. cit., p. 59-60.
148. W. Kaufmann, Nietzsche : Philosopher, Psychologist, Anti-Christ, p. 149.
149. J. P. Stern : op. cit., p. 61

A Critical Estimate

Because of free thinking and iconoclast attitudes, Nietzsche has been a controversial philosopher. On closer analysis, we come across a bundle of contradictions in his way of philosophising various issues. The emphasis on the Will-to-Power, however, is important in itself. The fear of decadence certainly aggravated the ruthless struggle for revival in human society. In seeming it also as the effect of the Will-to-Power, Nietzsche indicated another impulse which is at work—the attempt to make man a God. Christianity had concentrated attention so entirely on God-man that now that 'God is dead', he has to be replaced by making man a God. This urge is probably most clearly expressed by one of Destoevsky's characters who speaks like Nietzsche before Nietzsche had developed these ideas. In The Possessed, Kirillov is convinced that 'there is no God', and concludes : "If God exists, all is His Will and from His Will I cannot escape. If not, it's all my Will and I am bound to show self-will...If there is no god, then I am God."[150] Or, as Nietzsche puts it : "If there were gods how could I bear it to be no god myself ? Therefore, there are no gods."[151] Since the Superman belongs to a far away future, it is understandable that the description of him remains vague; by definition he must transcend all actual knowledge. But there is one genius whom Nietzsche admires so much that we feel that the Superman is fashioned upon the image of this man—Napolean of his achievements, Nietzsche says that they are "almost the history of the higher happiness...which has been in this century in its most valuable man and moments...He has brought again to the surface a whole part of the antique character, and what is perhaps the important part," and thus he has introduced a new era. "We owe it to Napolean...that several centuries of

150. Dostoevsky : The Possessed, Everyman's Library, II, pp. 254-55.

151. Nietzsche : Thus Spake Zarathustra, II, ch. 2.

war, unequalled in history, may now follow each other; in short, that we have entered the classical age of war...upon which all the following centuries will look with envy and awe as on a manifestation of perfection."[152]

Destructive as Nietzsche's philosophy may be, however, it nevertheless makes development possible, because he never bars the way to the future. Honesty means to him to be concerned with 'immanence', to believe, to believe only in what can be experienced here and now; he tries to discuss anything transcendental or supernatural. "The world of appearance is the only world; the "true world" is a lie added to it."[153] Nietzsche remains aware that, despite the problems which may be solved, the fact of existence still represents an insoluable mystery. Because he knows the sense of emptiness created by the disappearance of the Christian concept of God, he also knows that most concept we use have lost much of their meaning; he therefore tries to re-think all our thoughts in terms of immanence. In this context, however, the many contradictions in his philosophy prove their worth, for they show that none of the new terms can completely replace the transcendental; his clear sightedness and honesty save him from false completeness.

Whether Nietzsche is an existentialist or not is a question about which critics differ, but in any event he has exerted a strong influence on the movement. "In the story of existentialism, Nietzsche occupies a central place : Jaspers, Heidegger, and Sartre are unthinkable without...Existentialism without Nietzsche would be almost like Thomism with Aristotle, but to call Nietzsche an existentialist is a little like calling Aristotle a Thomist."[154] We read, Nietzsche says, a "transvaluation

152. Genseits von Gut und Bose, 199, and Die frohliche Wissenschaft, 362
153. Gotzendammerung, 'Die Vernuft in der Philosophie', 2.
154. Kaufmann : Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, p. 17.

of all values." Man does not *discover* his values; he *creates* them and projects them on the world. The mind constructs its world by giving a meaningless mass of phenomena its shape and order. The whole creative work of Nietzsche is occupied by three problems; the relation between the human and the divine which to him is the Superman; the creative power of man, which ought to create new values; and suffering, the heroic power of holding out against suffering.[155] The aspiration of Nietzsche towards the divine heights was expressed in the will to rise above man. He preaches the Superman which is for him a pseudonym of the divine. Nietzsche has no use for man and the human. He would take his stand under the banner of fate (amor fati), and he did not desire the victory of man over fate, as Marx desired it. In this he found the tragic sense of life, hence his animosity against Socrates, his realisation of the instincts, his mysticism of blood, which is akin to that of Gobineau. He is a defender of the principle of heredity and aristocracy. He is considered as an individualist, but he was an antipersonalist.[156]

He understood that Christianity has a revolution against the aristocratic principle of ancient civilization—'the last shall be first.' With Nietzsche as with all German thought before him, there are not two natures; there is no meeting; there is no mystery of God-mankind. There is only one nature all in all. He is regarded as an atheist. Nietzsche would like God to return. God torments him as He torments the heroes of Dostoevsky. His quest was for the Superman; but what must be sought for is man who is fully man. Present-day man is still not fully man; he is still half-beast and not infrequently worse than a beast. To him man is a shame and a disgrace. Yet at the same time he endows man with a capacity for creation, for the creation of values, the creation of a new world, and with

155. Berdyaev : The Divine and The Human, p. 35.
156. Ibid., p. 36.

a capacity for heroic endurance of suffering.[157] "He is an existentialist in his taking the problems of his philosophy from the conflicts of the age instead of from the disputes of the schools. To make himself profoundly representative of his time and to surmount its problems in himself in public was his aim in philosophy, an aim which produces not systems or doctrines but a sharpening of awareness, a deepening of understanding, an orientation, a quickening of new possibilities."[158] W. H. Wright observes : "No philosopher since Kant has left so undeniable an imprint on modern thought as has Friedrich Nietzsche. Even Schopenhaur; whose influence coloured the greater part of Europe, made no such wide spread impression."[159] A modern critic evaluates his contribution in the following words : "The influence of Nietzsche upon modern culture is far-reaching. Philosophers like Vaihinger, Bergson, and Sartre all have felt the impact of his ideas. He, probably more than any other thinker, symbolizes the mood of modern man. Moreover, his thoughts have affected many of the outstanding novelists of our time, especially Gide and Thomas Mann."[160] He further elucidates, "It is a mistake to see Nietzsche mainly as a forerunner of National Socialism, for his main attempt was to bring about a new concept of morality, a new way of life and a new philosophy. His importance lies in his criticism of contemporary culture. More than any other thinker, he realized the weakness of the Victorian spirit and the smugness which characterized so much of the 19th century."[161]

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157. Ibid., p. 37.
158. H.J. Blackham : Six Existentialist Thinkers, 1961, p. 36.
159. W. H. Wright : The Philosophy of Nietzsche, Introduction, p. VII.
160. Fredrick Mayer : A History of Modern Philosophy, pp. 518-19.
161. Ibid.

CHAPTER TEN

Albert Camus

Camus and his Time

Along with other devastating occurrences, two major wars within a quarter of century, revolutions, mass deportations, concentration camps, have accustomed us to think in terms of the widespread possibilities of imprisonment, torture, and violent death.[1] The political upheavals of the century shook the sensitive heart of Albert Camus. Camus himself observes : "Do you know that over a period of twenty five years, between 1922 and 1947, 70 million Europeans women and children—have been uprooted, deported, and killed ?"[2] Our country is, as he called it, "a century of fear",[3] for many of us the fear is a diluted one and, most of the time, dormant. But to Albert Camus, these characteristics of our time are subjects of scandal which he himself found impossible to evade. In answer, perhaps, to Sartre's contention that an artist must be "engaged" in the political issues of his time, Camus wrote : "It is not the struggle that makes artists of us, but art that obliges us to be combatants. By this very function the artist is the witness of freedom, and this is a justification for which he sometimes pays heavily."[4] And Camus assumed this function with all the hazards it involved : "My role...is not to transform the world nor mankind. I have not enough virtue nor sufficient wisdom for that. But it is prehaps to serve, in my place, those few values

1. Germaine Bre'e (ed.) : Camus, A collection of Critical Essays, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliff, 1962, p. 3.
2. Albert Camus : Actuelles II, p. 33.
3. Albert Camus : Actuelles I, p. 141.
4. Ibid., p. 264.

without which a world, even transformed, is n't worth-living in, without which a man, even now, is not worthy of respect."[5]

Camus vehemently opposed the Marxist version of history and with it the so-called "realist" approach to political action. He disagreed with the idea that in politics the end justifies the means. For the word "revolution" he substituted the word renaissance". He did not believe that it would be brought about by a dedicated group. "We can no longer live without positive values. Bourgeois morality repels us by its hypocrisy and cruelties. We find equally repugnant the political cynicism that reigns in the revolutionary movement. As for the independent left, it is, in fact, fascinated by communist power and entangled in a Marxism of which it is ashamed".[6]

The World of Poverty and Suffering

In his book entitled L'Envers et l' endroit[7] Camus presents, an old woman sitting in a corner with a rosary, a Christ made of lead, and a plaster St. Joseph carrying a child. To the young man, the guest who has come to dinner, she numbles her eternal litany of boredom and loneliness. When, after dinner, he and the family go out for the evening he feels "confronted by the most terrible misfortune he had ever known, that of an old, crippled woman they were abandoning to go to the movies". In her solitude she is deprived of all comforts. Beyond her leaden Christ there is nothing but a deep, black space-Death. She has been stripped of everything that might mask her human condition. "Nothing would protect her now, and abandoned entirely to the thought of her death, she didn't know exactly what frightened her, but felt she did not wish to

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5. Ibid.

6. A. Camus : La Liberataire, May, 1952.

7. A. Camus : L, Envers et l' endroit, dedicated to Jean Grenier in 1937, a volume of essay.

be alone. She did not wish to leave the other human beings".[8]

The second essay presents a sincere study of an old man seated at a cafe table with three young men, who (the old man) went on talking. He has nothing to say, but "he makes haste to say everything before his audience leaves him". He, too, is "condemned to silence and solitude", and as he walks away he suddenly realizes that "At the end of one's life, old age comes over one like nausea. Everything ends by no one listening... Behind the hills that surrounded the town, there was still a glow of light...The old man closed his eyes. Face to face with the life that carried along with it the roar of the city and the vacuous, naked, death already".[9] To the open eyes of Camus, everything appears in its naked simplicity. Just as, in the next essay, "Entre oul et non", he contemplates his sick mother "as if she were the immense pity of his heart which had moved outside him, had become endowed with a body, and was conscientiously...playing the part of a poor old woman with a moving destiny".

Comparing Camus with Malraux, Germaine Bree elucidates that unlike Malraux who discovered "fundamental man", stripped of intellectual anguish and drive, Camus had from the beginning an acute awareness of his existence : "To be a man, that is what counts. His grandmother will die, then his mother then he himself...to do one's task and accept being a man leads to being old..."[10]This is wisdom he learned as a child. To transmit this fundamental and stark simplicity is one of the projects he set before himself. "It is in this life of poverty among, surely reached what seemed to me the real meaning of life", he wrote in 1935, the words which he was to repeat twenty years later.[11]

8. Ibid., (Charlot 1937), p. 7.
9. Ibid., (Charlot 1937). p. 15.
10. Germaine Bree : Camus, op. cit., p. 77.
11. A. Camus : Notebooks (1935) and the Preface (1957) to L' Envers et l'endroit.

God of this Earth : Albert Camus and Christian Faith

Like other contemporary existentialists Camus was shocked by the thought of human restlessness and mortality. What differentiates Camus from others is that he has "a feeling of responsibility for the suffering of humanity, a suffering all the more intolerable. This sense of personal responsibility is strangely close to certain Christian attitudes."[12] Albert Camus has chosen quite ordinary persons as the heroes of his novels and dramas. We may quote a few of them. For example: "Mersault, for me", wrote Camus, is "a poor and naked man, in love with the sun which leaves no shadows. He is far from being totally deprived of sensibility, for he is animated by a passion, profound because it is tacit, the passion for the absolute and for truth. It is still a negative truth, the truth of being and feeling, but a truth, without which no conquest of the self or of the world is possible."[13] That is why, upto the last moment, Meursault is the man who answers but never asks a question, and all his answers alarm a society which cannot bear to look at the truth.[14]

The Plague is another contribution of Albert Camus which consists of symbolic meaning and penetrating impact on rotten convention and activities of society. "From whatever point of view we consider it—individual, political, social and metaphysical—the symbol of the pestilence thus used, establishes a direct convention between evil and paralysis of our human conscience, intelligence, and the will."[15] The Plague is the inner awareness of man's accidental and transitory presence on the earth. This awareness is the source of all metaphysical torment. Albert Camus regards it as one of the chief characteristics of our age. The conclusions which the two main characters

12. Germaine Bree : op. cit., p. 86.
13. A. Camus : Avant—Propos" to l' Estranger (New York : Appleton-Century-Crafts, 1955), p. viii.
14. See Germaine Bree : Camus, p. 114.
15. Ibid., p. 120.

draw from their encounter with The Plague appear quite controversial and irreconcilable : for Rieux, a doctor cannot accept consolation from a priest; for Paneloux, a priest cannot accept the ministrations of a doctor, since a doctor is the enemy of a God who permits evil to reign in this world. "Since the order of the world is governed by death", Rieux says, "it is better, perhaps, for God "that one should not believe in Him and should fight with all one's strength against death".[16] Camus has focussed his attention on existing atmosphere in order to convey his impression : "I wish to express, by means of the plague, the feeling of suffocating from which we all suffered and the atmosphere of threat and exile in which we lived. At the same time I want to extend my interpretation to the notion of existence in general...The Plague will give an image of those whose share during the war was meditation, silence, and moral suffering."[17] Camus emphatically asserts that Christianity presents a humiliating image of man. Most of his plays "follow a basic common pattern : the "natural" order of human life is dislocated; a system takes over which is the very negation of order, a systematised disorder, a perversion in which the notions of good and evil are inverted; life is drained of its substance, then comes a struggle and a final resolution in which temporality, the natural order reasserts itself."[18] Camus fought against this intellectual perversion. Likewise he disagreed with the social solution sought by some staunch followers of Christianity; for example, the solution proposed by Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor "You have elevated men and taught them pride", accuses the Grand Inquisitor, judging Christ. The perversion of Christ's message, he proposes, is to keep man humble and satisfied with simple "permitted joys", to make them deaf to that "great inner aspiration" of which Martha speaks. In con-

16. A. Camus : The Plague.
17. A. Camns : Notebooks, quoted in Germaine Bree : Camus, p. 128.
18. Germaine Bree : op. cit., p. 128.

trast, Camus proposes in each of his plays that man "be proud of his revolt", but that "the revolt be, like Diagos', one of the heart and not merely of the head."[19]

Camus' inclination towards religion is somewhat more peculiar than the common trend of religious sanctions. "To characterise Camus as a religious—moral philosopher means to say that his pre-occupation is with questions of the nature and meaning of man, their hopes, their possibilities, and their destiny. And within this area Camus has established a positive humanism."[20] His estimate of the Christian faith is summed up most simply in his abrupt remark that "in its essence Christianity (and this is the paradoxical greatness) is a doctrine of injustice. It is founded on the sacrifice of the innocent and the acceptance of this sacrifice."[21] In the eyes of Camus, the Jesus of Nazareth was an innocent man unjustly killed. Christians accept it as a sacrifice. On closer analysis, it appears horrible and unjust that an innocent man should be killed. "This is what is paradoxical in Christianity. And the greatness in this metamorphosis of injustice, found in attitude which transcends and minimises the abiding reality of human suffering."[22] If this is a world in which innocents must be tortured, and if God rules, then God is responsible : this is a first consequence of the idea of a personal God which first appeared in the Old Testament. And with the appearance of a personal God also appears religious guilt and crime. "In response to the primary human evidence of evil and death, Christianity posits a sovereign God whose will to lead the world from its given condition to chosen condition is in part counter-balanced by loving relation for the world as it is. The paradoxical greatness of this faith is that it poses the "should" against the "is" of this world but yet cannot bring itself to despair the "is". From the viewpoint of

19. Quoted in Germaine Bree : Camus, op. cit., p. 128.
20. Germaine Bree : Camus, op. cit., p. 48.
21. A. Camus : The Rebel,
22. Germaine Bree : op. cit., p. 50.

morality, this is the certain effect of the central doctrines of the Christian faith."[23] Camus does not feel that Christianity is a religion of resignation. In reply to the interviwer who spoke of it in this manner, he said : "But I would like twice before saying as you do that the Christian faith is a resignation. Can one put down this word for a St. Augustine or a Pascal ? Honesty requires that we judge a doctrine by its summits, not by its sub-products. And in the final analysis, little though I know about these matters, I have the impression that faith is not so much a peace as a tragic hope"[24]

Camus means to say that, with the advent of the modern period and of critical reason, Jesus was discovered to be not of God but man, "To the exact degree in which the divinity of Christ had been denied, pain became once more the lot of men. Jesus, frustrated, is but another innocent whom the representatives of the God of Abraham had execuated in a spectacular manner."[25] Camus maintains that socialism and atheism go hand in hand : "All socialism is Utopian, and first of all scientific. The Utopian replaces God with the future. It then identifies the future with morality; the only value is that which serves this future."[26] It is for this reason that Camus insists that to understand the history of Christianity is to understand Marxism. Marxism, like Christianity places its ultimate values outside history, and history itself is the sacrificial effort to achieve these values. Marxism shares Christianity's impatience with the "is" of this world in the light of a "should" which is beyond history.[27] The apocalypse of history in the classless society is no more justified than the coming Kingdom of Heaven.

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23. Ibid., p. 52.
24. A. Camus : Actuelles, quoted in Germaine Bree : Camus, p. 52.
25. A. Camus : The Rebel.
26. Ibid.
27. Germaine Bree : Camus, op. cit., p. 54

Camus seeks to define himself in contrast to both Christianity and Marxism. "Christians and Communists will tell me what their optimism is of a more extended scope that is superior to all others, and that God or history, according to the case, are the satisfactory determinations of their dialectic. I have the same argument to present. If Christianity is pessemistic in regard to me, it is optimistic in regard to human destiny, I am optimistic in regard to man."[28] Camus indicates once more that man's kingdom is within him and "of this earth". Surrounded by overwhelming and threatening nature of the world, Camus exhorts people to revolt. His slogan is to "create; to transform the humanity of the world into the image of man, to humanize what is inhuman—in short, to civilize. This is the "new humanism" put forth by Albert Camus".[29] But, after all we ask, what man ? "Man", replies Camus; "is that force which always ends by holding off gods and tyrants".[30]

Vies Absurdies : The Myth of Sisyphus

Camus comes to the problem of the absurd from a practical and human cycle. He generally avoids abstraction and speaks more as an involved individual than as an objective philosopher. Camus uses the term "absurd" differently from Sartre. Sartre has commented as follows on the different meanings he and Camus give to the term "absurd" : "Camus' philosophy is a philosophy of the absurd. For him the absurd arises from the relation between man and the world, between man's rational demand and the world's irrationality. The themes which derive from it are those of classical pessimism. I do not recognise the absurd in the sense of scandal and disillusionment that Camus attributes to it. What I call the absurd is something

28. Camus : Actuelles, quoted in Germaine Bree : Camus, op. cit. p. 56.
29. Germaine Bree : Camus, op. cit, p. 58.
30. A. Camus : Letters to a German Friend in Resistance: Rebellion and Death.

very different : it is the universal contingency of being which is, but which is not the basis of its being; the absurd is the given, unjustifiable, primordial quality of existence".[31] In fact, the whole discussion of the absurd in The Myth of Sisyphus is made confusing and debatable by a failure to distinguish clearly between 'unknown' and 'unknowable'.[32] Thus in the passage in question, Camus writes : "I said the world is absurd, but I was being too hasty. All one can say of the world is that it is not amendable to reason. The absurd, however, is the confrontation of this non-rational world by that desperate desire for clarity which is one of man's deepest needs. The absurd depends as much on man as on the world for its existence"[33]. Thus, the absurd is wholly irremedible. Man's consciousness as a human being seals him off from the world and from his standpoint the world is not simply unknown but unknowable. Knowledge of the world would only be possible for man if he ceased to be man and become part of the external, physical creation which he experiences : "If I were a tree among trees, a cat among the animals, this life would have meaning, or rather this problem would be without meaning because I would be part of this world".

A well-known modern critic remarks : "The feeling of absurd can arise in many ways, from the perception of the "inhumanity" or indifference of nature, from the realisation of man's temporality or the death which reveals the uselessness of human life or from the shock occasioned by perceiving the ultimate pointlessness of daily life".[34] Camus explains the monotonous routine of life in these words. "Give up, tramway, four hours at the office or in the factory, a meal, tramway, four hours of work, meal, sleep, and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday in the same rhythm ... One follows—

31. Jean-Paul Sartre : Paru, December, 1945.
32. A. Camus : Sisyphus, p. 37.
33. Ibid., p. 74.
34. Copleston : Contemporary Philosophy, p. 197.

this path without difficulty most of the time. One day, however arises the question "Why ?".[35] The absurd like all other worldly things, ends with death. In Camus' play Caligula, Cherea asserts that he rejects the world as Caligula sees it and the emperor must "disappear", "because I want to live and to be happy. I believe that one can neither live nor be happy if one pushes the absurd to all its conclusions". Again "to lose one's life is a little thing and I shall have the courage to do so if necessary; but to see the meaning of this dissipated, to see our reason for existing disappear, that is what is unbearable. One cannot live without meaning".[36] The thinkers whom Camus calls the existentialist philosophers (les philosophes existentials) try to escape by means of a "leap". Kierkegaard, for instance, makes the "leap of faith", his thought leaping beyond the world it gives in its greatness : "the spectacle of human pride cannot be equalled". "This world is without importance", says Caligula, "and he who recognises the fact wins his freedom". In the meaningless world all is permitted. But this does not mean that crime is recommended. "All is permitted does not signify that nothing is forbidden. The absurd simply makes the cousequences of these acts equivalent. It does not recommend crime; that the world is childish; but it restores to remove its uselessness. In the same way, if all experiences are indifferent, that of duty is as legitimate as any other. One can be virtuous by caprice".[37]

"The Gods", Camus tells us, "had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of a mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight. They had thought, with some reason that no punishment is worse than a task that

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35. A. Camus : Sisyphus, (Penguine Modern Classics, 1975) p. 19.
36. A. Camus : Caligula, quoted in Copleston : Contemporary Philosophy, p. 197.
37. A. Camus : Sisyphus.

is useless and without hope".[38] Sisyphus, in Camus' eyes, is the hero of the absurd, "as much because of his passions as because of his torment. His disdain for the gods, his hatred of death, his passion for life caused the ineffable torment in which all one's being is utilized to achieve nothing. This is the price one must pay for the passions of the earth".[39] Sisyphus absorbed in the task imposed upon him by the gods, has moved revolt. As he approaches the summit and the rock starts to roll down to the bottom of the slope, Sisyphus watches it in complete awareness and starts his own descent with even steps : "All the silent joy of Sisyphus is there. His destiny is his own. His rock is his possession."[40] The absurd in human being is by definition wedded to life; and evasion of life is a capitulation. Life is our rock.[41]

Camus makes of a tragic hero an absurd hero[42] and likewise the burden of the task, the suffering is matched by happiness. "Happiness and the absurd are two sons of the same earth."[43] This comes about if fate is seen as a human matter, and it is this which marks the difference between ancient tragedy and modern absurdity,[44] the bonds imposed by Gods and the bonds imposed by man. "All Sisyphus silent joy is contained therein. His fate belongs to him. His rock is his thing."[45] He knows the limits, and in this an element of ancient wisdom prevails. Camus' conclusion is "The struggle itself towards the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus is happy."[46]

38. Ibid., p. 164.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid., p. 164.
41. Germaine Bree : Camus, op. cit., p. 207.
42. Margarett Chatterji : The Existentialist Outlook, Oriental Longman, 1973, p. 95.
43. A. Camus : Sisyphus, p. 98.
44. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 95.
45. A. Camus : Sisyphus, p. 98.
46. Ibid., quoted in Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 95.

A modern thinker observes : "In a world where values are relative, Camus saw no need to negate them all, or to seek refuge in a mystical consolation. The world may be cruel, but cruelty can be alleviated by the human quality of mercy."[47] The world may be absurd, but man is not : "I continue to believe that this world has no ultimate meaning. But I know that something in it has meaning, and that is man, because he is the only creature to insist on having one...."[48] Camus was concerned with life and death, with people that live and die, not with philosophy...When Camus talks about the absurd, he is articulating an emotion felt by all, he is not proposing a school of thought. "I am not a philosopher and can only talk about experiences I have lived through."[49] Camus considered the love of life more important than the meaning of life. He agreed with Dostoevsky's view that one must love life before knowing its meaning, and he added that when the love of life disappears, no meaning can console.

The Stranger

L' Stranger is the story of a man who is insignificant, inoffensive and unremarkable. He lived a life of the senses, in total simplicity and innocent enjoyment, but whom society eventually roots out, humiliates, and crushes. In the cell, he refuses angrily the consolation offered by the priest, because he does not believe in God, but does believe in the life of which he is about to be deprived. Whereas L' Stranger was an imaginative account of a state of mind culminating in the discovery of a new attitude towards life, Sisyphus is an intellectual examination of this attitude towards life. L' Stranger is the story of a feeling; Sisyphus is the description of that feeling. It is an essay on the question which every thinking person must ask at

47. Brian Master's : A student Guide to Camus, Heinmann Educational Books, London, 1974, p. 2.
48. A. Camus : Letters ā un Ami Allemand, Gallimard, 1948, p. 74. Quoted in Brian Masters, op. cit., p. 2.
49. A. Camus : Actuelles, I, p. 83. Gallimard, 1950.

some stage : is life really worth living ? Camus explains. It is an attempt to show how and why life is precious, inspite of the fact that it is pointless, meaningless, and must end in death, it is "the soliloquy of an artist facing the idea of death".[50] Now it is unjust to say that Camus regards man as absurd. What is absurd is the relationship between man and the objects of his understanding, the link which ties man to the world. The world is not absurd, it is irrational, incongruous. The absurd is born of man's dissatisfaction with this irrationality; "This world in itself is not reasonable, that is all that can be said. But what is absurd is the confrontation of the irrational and the wild longing for clarity whose call echoes in the human heart. The absurd depends as much on man as on the world. For the moment it is all that links them together ... man stands face to face with the irrational. He feels within him his longing for happiness and for reason. The absurd is born of this confrontation between human need and the unreasonable silence of the world ... The irrational, the human nostalgia, and the absurd that is born of their encounter".[51]

Life is useless. Man aspires towards eternity and is crushed beneath the 'bloody mathematics' of his condition: "I come at least to death and to the attitude we have towards it. On this point everything has been said and it is only proper to avoid pathos. Yet one will never be sufficiently surprised that everyone lives as if no one "knew" ... No code of ethics and no effort are justifiable *a priori* in face of the cruel mathematics that command our condition".[52] There is a difference between deciding that life is meaningless and deciding that it is not worth living; indeed, Camus' whole work is a clarification of that difference. His revolt promotes specially human qualities

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50. Conor Cruise O' Brien, Camus, 'Modern Masters', Fantana, 1970, p. 30.

51. A. Camus : Sisyphus, pp. 26, 31-32 (Penguine Modern Classics, 1975).

52. Ibid., pp. 29-30.

of justice and happiness to counteract the irrationality of life. In Letters ā un Ami Allemand he writes: "Man should proclaim justice in order to fight against eternal injustice, he should create happiness as a protest against the world of unhappiness".[53] Camus wants his revolt to restore to man the dignity and honour which he feels: "refusing to allow this despair and this tormented world, I wanted only that men should realise over their solidarity so as to wage war, against their disgusting fate". [54] Camus expresses a feeling, a longing for a 'better life' which is the basis of all religious temptation. What Caligula has done is to become God. "I have simply understood that there is only one way to make oneself equal to the gods : you must be as cruel as they are",[55] he says. And again, "Anyone can play the celestical game and become god. You have only to harden your heart".[56]

Emergence of Revolt

Within the moral of the absurd, the ethic of revolt deliberately recommends neither crime nor virtue, but it preserves a kind of responsibility. "His ethic of revolt is an ethic of quantity and concentrates on the immediate, ... and experiences their variety with the greatest possible degree of intensity. Experience itself, rather than the result of experience becomes his goal. One is reminded of the *divertissement* described by Pascal, except that while Pascal sees it as escape Camus presents it as continued awareness".[57] We come across a similar idea in the final chapter of Pater's The Renaissance. Speaking of life as an interval between the void before birth and the void after death, Pater says : "Our one choice lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given

53. A. Camus : Letters ā un Ami, op. cit., p. 73.
54. Ibid., p. 73.
55. A. Camus : Caligula, p. 192.
56. Ibid., p. 196.
57. John Cruishanks : Albert Camus, op. cit., p. 74.

time".[58] Camus has a forceful refutation of the communist theory and practice which serve as an utter betrayal of the original nature of revolt.[59] His observations on Marxism and with a restatement of the differences between metaphysical revolt and political revolution : "Revolt demands unity, historical revolution demands totality. The first starts from a 'no' based on 'yes', the second starts from absolute negation and condemns itself to every kind of slavery in order to create an affirmation transferred to the end of time. The one is creative, the other nihilistic".[60] The revolt does not aim unbridled freedom. The revolt sets limits to freedom. Camus writes : "The rebel damands undoubtedly a certain degree of freedom for himself; but in no case, if he is consistent, does he demand the right to destroy the existence and the freedom of others. He humiliates no one. The freedom he claims, he claims for all; the freedom he refuses, he forbids everyone to enjoy. He is not only the slave against the master, but also man against the world of master and slave".[61]

A modern critic comments : "Camus' rebel is not in a generalised state of despair as some of the existentialists claim to be, now, he is in the romantic analogous state of "Weltschmerg".[62] The rebel considers "things in particular", a particular injustice, some particular awareness of suffering. The rebel then reacts, and "every rebellion tacitly involves a value".[63] Camus' preoccupation is with injustice. In his drama Cross Purpose, Martha says, "Remember that your sorrow will never equal the injustice done to me". And in a latter play, Les Jus-

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58. W. Pater : The Renaissance, London, Macmillan, 1922, p. 238, quoted in John Cruishanks : Camus, p. 74.
59. John Cruishanks : Albert Camus, op. cit., p. 92.
60. A. Camus : L' Homme Revolte, p. 308.
61. A. Camus : The Rebel, Penguin Classics, p. 248.
62. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 96.
63. A. Camus : The Rebel, p. 20

tes, which brings out the anomaly of using violence for a "good cause" Skourator says, "One begins by wanting justice and one ends by organising a police force". Before Camus, Nietzsche had noticed that "almost everything that we call 'higher culture' is based on the spiritualising and intensifying of cruelty".[64] Camus goes further and refuses to agree with the principle that the end justifies the means. The metaphysical rebel says Camus, "protests against the human condition in general".[65] Unlike Sartre who would interpret this is terms of negation, Camus diserves at the back of this, "an assessment of values in the name of which the rebel refuses to accept the condition in which he finds himself".[66] Metaphysical rebelion means protests against suffering, death and evil. "The metaphysical rebel is, therefore, certainly not an atheist, as one might think him, but inevitably he is a blasphemer. He simply blasphemes, primarily in the name of order, by denouncing God as the origin of death and as the supreme disillusionment".[67] Camus has focussed his attention on the concept of justice and its relation to freedom. He makes a clear distinciion between rebellion and revolution. "Rebellion is localized, limited in scope, a reaction against a specific injustice. Revolution, however, is inspired by ideas and aims at totality and unity".[68] If this is so it is not surprising that "The majority of revolutions are shaped by, and derive their originality from murder".[69] The God of the Jesus and the Christians was dethroned. The twentieth century has been terribly disturbed by individual horror and heinous crime. Man is deprived of grace and justice.[70] In his novels and essays Camus openly "advocates a

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64. Nietzsche : Beyond Good and Evil, p. 229.
65. A. Camus : The Rebel, p. 29.
66. Ibid., p. 29.
67. Ibid., p. 30.
68. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 106.
69. A. Camus : The Rebel, p. 79.
70. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 106.

rejection of God in the name of a loving solidarity with mankind in its ignoble condition of suffering and eventual death. Dismayed by man's abandoned condition, the rebel advances from an initial attitude of blasphemy, through an outright denial of God".[71] Camus writes : "Thus, we understand that rebel cannot exist without a strange form of love. Those who find no rest in God or in history are condemend to live for those who, like themselves, cannot live, in fact, or the humiliated".[72] Existential philosophy is quite superior to that of moral theology. Theology is seen as fostering indifference to the human predicament. For example, Rieux the atheist doctor in the Plague remarks that if he believed in an all-powerful God he "would cease curring the sick and leave that to Him'".[73] He is an atheist because he believes that authentic morality consists in "fighting against creation as he found it'".[74] The predominant ethos of existential thought is sensitively conveyed by Camus in the following striking passage: "The words which reverberate for us at the confines of this long adventure of rebellion, are not formula for optimism, for which we have no possible use in the extermities of our unhappiness, but words of courage and intelligence, on the shores of the eternal seas, even have the qualities of virtue. No possible form of wisdom to-day...We offer an example, the only original rule of life, today : to learn to live and to die, and in order to be a man, to refuse to be a god".[75]

Quest for Happiness

A genuine question arising in the book Sisyphus is : how can a life that has no meaning best be lived ? Camus considers the

71. Patrick Masterson Atheism and Alienation, p. 129.
72. A. Camus : The Rebel, ed. and trans. A. Brown, Penguine Books, London, 1962, p. 268.
73. A. Camus : The Plague, ed. trans., S. Gilbert, 'The collected Fiction of Albert Camus,' London, 1960, p. 144.
74. Ibid., p. 144.
75. A. Camus : The Rebel, pp. 226-9.

possibility of suicide and writes that "it is the only truly philosophical problem". In the context of this discussion he examines what he calls the "absurd walls" within which the drama of our human condition is played out. The sentiment of the absurd is "a light without radiance," which can strike anywhere at any moment. In his four lectures to a German friend, Camus writes : "I continue to believe that this world has no superior meaning. But I know that something in it has meaning : it is man, because man is the sole being to insist upon having meaning". Further he explains : "Within the limits of the "absurd" experience, suffering is individual. Starting with the movement of revolt, we are aware of suffering as a collective experience, as everyone's adventure. I revolt, therefore, we are".[76] This defines the gradual evolution of Camus' thought from The Stranger to The Plague. "In the modern way of life, the philosophy of action is the sensitive core, the touchstone of any doctrine to-day".[77] Action in Camus' eyes must remain faithful to its twofold origin, the "no" sitting in judgement, and the "yes" ready to "change life but not the world". Divided at its source, action can only be charged with anguish. "Poverty prevented me from believing that all is well in history and in the world; the sun taught me that history is not everything." In the course of the debate caused by The Rebel, Sartre criticized Camus for placing human values in "the battle of man against heaven", and by so doing forgetting the concrete and historical reasons for action. But on closer analysis, one can understand that Camus rediscovers the value of life and happiness lost in the tumult and terror of our age. "Rieux straightened up and said in a firm voice...that there was no shame in preferring happiness—Yes, said Rambert, but there may be shame in being happy all alone".[78] Camus says, "Man's solidarity is founded upon rebellion, and rebellion can only

76. A. Camus : The Rebel.
77. Bermaine Bree, (ed) : Camus, op. cit. ,p. 81.
78. A. Camus : The Plague.

be justified by this solidarity".[79] Again he explains. "I rebel, therefore, I exist",[80] Camus has faced the problems of man and by accepting the absurdity with the beings, he has tried his best to attach morality with it. Sartre has criticised this type of morality. Sartre says : "You were the first servant of your moralism, and now you help yourself to it".[81]

In the budding stage of his writings, Camus has tried to reveal two main features : an instinctive atheism and continual emphasis on the individual's physical experience of his environment. He discusses the two extremes of intellectual frustration and physical enjoyment. He tries to find out possible means of reconciliation between these two experiences. It is to the Greeks that Camus turns, then, both for conformation of the reality of his problem and possible guidance as to its solution.[82] In the interview he is quoted as saying : "Greece is shadow and light. We men of the south know perfectly well that the sun has its dark side".[83] Incidently Camus has insisted that a personal response to happiness is a central theme in his work. He said in the same interview of 1951 : "When I seek to discover what is most fundamental in myself it is a state for happiness that I find......This is invincible sunshine at the heart of my work".[84]

A clear contrast between youth and age, life and death, pleasure and fear is maintained throughout—'L' Iroinie'. This is irony in each individual life. Camus makes a final comment which acknowledges this and then turns way from it : "A woman whom one leaves alone in order to visit the cinema, an old man to whom one no longer listens, a death which redeems

79. A. Camus : The Rebel, p. 27.
80. Ibid., p. 28.
81. 'Reply to Albert Camus', Situations, Sartre, p, 59.
82. John Cruishanks : Camus, op. cit. p. 23.
83. A. Camus : Les Nouvelles Litteraires, 10 May 1951.
84. Ibid.

nothing, and then on the other hand, all the brightness of the world. What does it matter if one accepts all these things ? Three similar and yet distinct destinies are involved. Death comes to everyone, but to each his own death. After all, the sun warms our bones despite everything".[85] The second piece, "Amour de Vivre" contains reflections on a visit to the Balearic Islands. "Here again the tragic ambivalence compounded of the desirable intensity and inevitable brevity of physical life is stressed. The experience of the gulf between the individual and the natural world prompts Camus to relate the two terms of the dualism again in tragic interdependence".[86] "There is no love of life without despair about life."[87]

In Noces, Camus again discusses the obstinate problems of human existence. In this youthful world of sensual certainty and spiritual distrust, belief is based on only on sight :"...je vois equivaut ā je crois". He declares, "If I obstinately reject all the 'hereafter' of the world it is because I am also not prepared to renounce my immediate riches. I do not choose to believe that death opens on to another life. For me it is a closed door... Everything that is suggested to me is an attempt to take from man the burden of his own life."[88] The natural world is beautiful, beyond it, apparent from it, there is no salvation. He expresses in Noces what might be called 'naive atheism' since it occupies a place in religious speculation analogous to that of 'naive realism' in the theory of perception. In fact, what he presents in Noces is an early form of that "passionate disbelief". He reaffirms the value of physical happiness by making it the only possible source of supra-happiness. "What have I to do with an impossible truth, even were I to desire such a thing ? It is not made to my measure. To desire it would be to

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85. A. Camus : L' Envers et l' endroit, original (ed), p. 20.
86. John Cruishanks : Camus, op. cit., p. 29.
87. A. Camus : 'L' Ironie, p. 58.
88. A. Camus : Noces, p. 34.

deceive myself".[89] Noces ends with a sublime expression of Camus' formula for happiness : "...how can harmony between love and revolt be consecrated ? By the earth ! In this great temple abandoned by the gods all my idols have feet of clay".[90]

Camus and Sartre : Crisis and Commitment

Both, Camus and Sartre were concerned with examining the behaviours of people in twentieth-century world with a twentieth century awareness. Sartre's obsession with history compelled him to judge the man of to-day and as a result he called "the masked man of the future". Camus was deeply concerned with the present. Invariably, Sartre has been pre-occupied with the question of judgement, intellectual and moral. His intention was to understand the "man" perfectly. He uses the expression "singular expression"—a Hegelian term—because he conceives of all human behaviour in terms of a single basic drive—"the urge to become completely self-sufficient, autonomous, independent of anything external...",[91] and he is of opinion that the general laws of human psychology and Marxian analysis to an individual's behaviour will reveal its "singularity" and "universality" simultaneously. In the light of his personal experience, he explains : "Though my own history", he referred to his autobiography, "it is the history of my time that I want to transcribe".[92]

From the very commencement of his writings, Camus holds a secular view of the world along with its limitations of variety, relativity, and uncertainty. "The writer", he wrote, "tries to draw the materials of his art out of the complex world in which he is involved, and which he understands only partly, accepting

89. Ibid., p. 90.
90. Ibid., p. 92.
91. Ivan Soll : An Intro. to Hegel's Metaphysics (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1969).
92. Liberation, November 4, 1953.

the flux, pain and joy, fully yet without submission". The word "partly" separates him from Sartre. Truth he conceived as "mysterious, elusive, always to be conquered;' and freedom as "dangerous, as hard to live as it is exalting". Camus has perfectly realized the pressures of naked reality. La Mort heureuse is the sincere account of his personal experience. Life sets limits. A life that ends in death cannot be wasted. His characters : viz, Meurasault, The Stranger and Caligula are unparallel features. To Camus, they imparted the sense of life as risk. Each man, in Camus' eyes is his own Sisyphus. In Camus, there is no trace of Sartre's dialectic strategies : he was unable "to argue beyond the limits of concrete experience." His concern was not how to make the human scene intelligible but how to reason out and communicate his deep moral revulsion. This led to his confrontation with Sartre. Whereas Sartre was engaged in the project of revolutionising our minds, Camus was engaged in weighing and appraising those things that enhance human lives. Where Sartre sought unity, Camus spoke of harmony. A modern critic speaks of Camus : "Unlike the many of the existentialists he was close enough to the common man to know that every man looks forward to a modicum of happiness...Another major difference from Sartre is his refusal to think of commitment purely in political terms. His work is refreshingly free from ideological overtones".[93]

Life as Portrayed in the Dramas

Human life in its varied forms has been elaborately revealed in the dramas composed by Camus. In the present context, only two dramas—namely Caligula and Le Malertendu are worth mentioning. The case history of Caligula is associated by Camus with the absurd. The play opens after the death of Drusilla which makes Caligula conscious of the absurd. It appears, however, Drusilla's death in itself has upset him less than the features of the human condition which it indicates.

93. Margarett Chatterji : op. cit., p. 88.

He tells Hellicon that "men die and are not happy."[94] The death and despair of human beings constitute his discovery of the absurd. Caligula accepts its inevitability and rebels against it. He wants to enter what he himself describes as the realm of the impossible. "This world as it is not to be endured. Therefore I need the moon, or happiness, or immortality, something which is mad perhaps, but which does not belong to this world..."[95] Caligula institutes a cruel and capricious reign of terror among his subjects. It has the three-fold purpose of accepting the fact of the absurd, making a personal protest against it by bringing it out into the open, forcing others to recognise the truth Caligula has discovered. As act first comes to an end, he beats furiously on a going and shouts the Caesonia : "Life, Caesonia, is the opposite of love. It is I who tell you so and it is I who invite you to an unsurpassed celebration, to a public trial, to the finest of all spectacles. And I need people. I need the guilty. All of them are guilty. I want the condemned to be brought in...Judges, witnesses, the accused, all of them condemned in advance."[96]

The remaining three acts of the play show the effects of Caligula's decision. He imposes arbitrary suffering. At a whim he kills individuals. His cruelty is appalling and heinous, though he exposes shallowness, the mediocrity, the hypocrisy of many of his subjects. At one point, in the course of some comments on his own cruelty, he says to Scipio : "The rivalry of the gods has its irritating side for a man who loves power. I have suppressed it. I have proved to these illusory gods that, provided a man has the will, he can carry on their ridiculous trade without prior training.

Scipio : What is blasphemy ?

Caligula : No Scipio, it is lucidity. I have simply realized

94. A. Camus : Caligula, I. V.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid., I. xii.

that there is only one way of being equal with the gods. It is enough to be as equal as they are."[97]

These statements are enough to show that Caligula is a certain kind of *revolte*, but by his rebellion against the absurd he only intensifies it and the method of his revolt are utterly immoral and unjust. Caligula himself begins to realize this towards the end of the play. Having strangled Caesonia, he mutters :[98] "Yet murder is no solution". In the next scene, which is also the last, he condemns his actions as a whole. Not only does he decide that murder is no solution; he adds : "I have not taken the right road, I have achieved nothing. Mine is not the right kind of freedom."[99] Camus' own comment on Caligula's mistake is emboxed in a note included in the programme for the Hebertot production : "...if his integrity consists in his denial of the gods, his fault is to be found in his denial of man. One cannot destroy everything without destroying oneself. This is why Caligula depopulates the world around him and then, in keeping with his own logic, does what is necessary to arm against himself those who will ultimately kill him. Caligula's story is that of a high-minded type of suicide. It is an account of the most human and most tragic of mistakes. Caligula is faithless towards humanity in order to keep faith with himself. He consents to die, having learnt that no man can save himself alone and that one cannot be free by working against mankind. But, at least, he will have rescued some souls, including his own and that of his friend Scipio, from the dreamless sleep of mediocrity." Le Malentendu is a portrait of several characters caught up in the absurdity of existence. The incoherence of the world is referred to on various occasions, particularly in the third act. In the first scene of this act the mother speaks of 'this earth where nothing is certain', and adds that 'the world itself is not rational.' At

97. Ibid., III, ii.
98. Ibid., Act IV, Sc. xii.
99. Ibid., IV, xiii.

the very end of the play, awareness of the absurd is presented as the reason for Martha's acceptance of crime and lack of remorse. Earlier it had been the reason for her desire to escape to a distant and sunny country close to the sea. In the closing moments of the play, speaking to the brother she has murdered, she says to his distraught wife, Maria : "You must understand that there is neither homeland nor peace for him or for us, either in life or in death. One cannot regard as one's homeland, can one, this obscure world deprived of light..."[100] Almost immediately afterwards she adds : "Pray to your God that he may make you like stone. This is his private form of happiness, the only true happiness. Be like him, make yourself deaf to all cries, be like stone while there is still time."[101]

Martha's behaviour thus bears a close resemblance to that of Caligula. She attempts a violent and murderous revolt against the absurd. Martha says : "Crime is also a form of solitude, even if a thousand people commit it together. It is just that I should die alone after having lived and killed alone."[102] In this last sentence Martha refers to her own resolution to commit suicide—an action that recalls the 'high-minded' suicide of Caligula. In brief, Le Malentendu presents the absurd as an integral part of all existence.

A Critical Estimate

Camus spoke for those who could not speak. Inspite of, his shaking assumptions and unsystematic way of thinking, he occupies a dignified place among existentialist thinkers. "Camus' vision is an emphatically modern vision; in him we behold the style of the age, and this is so because, for him, the ultimate exigency which man faces in our time is an exigency arising out of a great abdication, a terrible collapse, a

100. A. Camus : Le Malentendu, III, iii.
101. Ibid., III, iii.
102. Ibid., III, iii.

tragic death, in the city of God Himself. His work is inspired by the characteristically modern sense that the only anchorage for the human enterprise, therefore, lies somewhere within itself... He sees the human voyage as utterly alone and with nothing to rely upon except the compass of his own mind and heart."[103] Camus explains; "In a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land."[104] Camus proposed to clarify the full implication of this terrible and absurd forlornness of man's estate. In this world, everything is given, and nothing is explained; the mind's hunger for coherence is countered by the irremediable incoherence of existence : "all the knowledge on earth will give me nothing to assure me that this world is mine.' Indeed, the ultimate outrage is the certainty that we will die, and "the cruel mathematics that command our condition" involves us in a tragic calculus that seems, in the end, to make for an absolute nullification of every conceivable value. Hence, the opening sentence of Sisyphus which is one of the most famous sentences in recent literature : "There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide."[105] Consequently, Camus finds no remedy in suicide. Suicide is an escape, not a solution.

Camus has chosen to ally himself with time, and has opted for the life of action rather than contemplation. "Between history and the eternal I have chosen history because I like certainties. Of it, at least, I can be certain...". He seeks contact with the spirit of metaphysical insurrection through the decisive historical act, by "plunging into the seething soul of revolution". Perhaps the key sentence in Camu's meditation on

103. Nathan A. Scott : Camus, Bowes to Bowes, London, First published in 1962 in the series Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought.

104. A. Camus : Sisyphus,

105. Ibid.

the meaning of art is that in which he says : "If the world were clear, art would not exist" : for this is the notion that is central to his whole understanding of the place of aesthetic creation in man's spiritual life. It is then, Don Juan, the actor, the conqueror, and the artist whom Camus offers as the great models of living in the absurd; and their dilemma is concentrated for him in the mythical image of Sisyphus.

R. W. B. Lewis acutely observed that in the case of L' Estranger, the movement is from an "carefully realized purposelessness through a prolonged absence of passion to the perfection that makes them both right and appropriate. It is, in short, the absurd mimesis of the tragic".[106] Camus throughout his writing was attempting to find "the means to proceed beyond nihilism". Like Cheria in Caligula, he believed that it is man's fate to live without hope and without grace. He wanted neither the easy infinities of conventional religion nor the Manichaean angelism of the modern nihilist, but rather "a form of order that orders indeed, but leaves reality, every iota of years and mine, intact-multitudinous, different and free, but together at last".[107] The French critic Roger Quilliot is highly critical in saying that "cut off from his divine ascendance, Christ becomes for Camus what was for Alfred de Vigny, the highest incarnation of human grandeur".[108] A modern thinker observes : "He was one who attempted to heal what is broken in human life, to defend mankind against the powers of darkness, and, through the depth and scope of his charity, he became the great exempter of resistance."[109]

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106. R. W. S. Lewis, the Picaresque Saint (Philandelphia : J. P. Lippincott Co., 1959), p. 71.
107. William F. Lynch, S. J., "Theology and the Imagination", Thought, Vol. XXX, No. 116 (Spring, 1955), p. 34.
108. Roger Quilliot, La Mer et less prisons : Essai sur Albert Camus (Paris : Gallimard, 1956), pp. 103-104.
109. Nathan A. Scott : Camus, op cit., p. 60.

The message of Noces[110] is that "if there is a sin against life, it is perhaps not so much in despairing as in hoping for another life, and in concealing the implacable grandeur of this one." And thus the author of this book was bent surrendering himself utterly to "the happy lassitude of my nuptials with the world." Camus suggests that the last way to get rid of 'absurd, is to rebel. He writes, "Thus I draw from the absurd three consequences which are my revolt, my freedom and my passion. By the mere activity of consciousness I transform into a rule of life what was an invitation to death and I refuse suicide."[111]

The concept of man, according to Camus has been described by a modern critic in the following lines : "From such perceptions he extracts a resolute humanism that seeks a way between romantic self-deceit and revolutionary inhumanity. Neither self-deceit nor murder (to which all political rebellion leads) makes life any more meaningful or more tolerable. Within each individual there is something that absurd affronts; that is sufficient reason to go on living, although Camus infers no divine intention from it."[112] The absurd of Camus has established his own logic and morality behind his revolt. It is in no way devoid of hope and pleasure. "The revolt of Camu's homme absurde is not a revolt against the human lot, it is merely an integral part of the human lot. To forge this revolt is to forge a part of one's humanity; the part we are most tempted to abandon because we are solicited by our nostalgia for eternity, our need for total understanding. Camu's homme absurde can be said to be without hope only in terms of the two human dreams of eternity and total understanding : he is not without hope in life itself. He is not without faith in the reality of his experience within the prison walls, nor is he without joy. Life offers him

110. A. Camus : Noces, published in Algiers by Charlot in 1938) in the volume of essays called L' Ete (published i n Paris by Gallimard in 1954).

111. A. Camus : The Sisyphus, Penguine Modern Classics, 1975.

112. Paul West : Modern Novels, p. 171. (Vol. I & II. Hutchinson University Library, London, 1967).

inexhaustible possibilities which within the limits of his morality, he is free to accept."[113] Camus' concept of man differentiates him from that of Malraux and Sartre : "The absurd for Camus requires no other universe than our daily world, our earth we see it, our fellow men, ourselves. Thus integrated into our daily lives, it can be faced at every moment and, by our action, denied. Our revolt against the absurd begins when our consciousness of its existence is followed by the refusal to be obsessed and paralysed by it. It is a state of mind. The emphasis which Malraux puts on death, Camus shifts to life. The emphasis which Sartre puts on the total liberty inherent in man's total contingency, Camus puts on lucidity."[114] In other words, it can be said that "Camus' love for life was selective, he preferred its primitive forms, pastorals and archetypes. Can he, on such a basis, create characters both anagogic and convincing ?"[115] A celebrated critic remarks: "His concern for individuals, his hatred for cruelty, his fight against totalitarianism, his opposition to capital punishment—all these were attributes which he found natural,...It is important, then, that we should see Camus under a double aspect as a man of conscience and integrity, and also as an intellectual whose mind could be subtle, ironic, incisive, yet grounded in common sense. To see him in this way is to begin to understand both his direct descent from the great French *moralites* and his importance for ourselves at the present time."[116] He openly admits, as modern psychology and perhaps even self-inspiration "can confirm; we all carry within us our prisons, our crimes, our destructiveness". "But" he adds, "to unleash them on the world is not our duty. Our duty consists in fighting them in ourselves and others."[116] The whole problem is set out at length in Camus' speech of acceptance on receiving the Noble Prize.[117]

113. Germaine Bree : Camus, p. 204.
114. Ibid., p. 211.
115. Paul West : op. cit., p. 175.
116. John Cruishanks : Camus, A. Tribute, p. viii.
117. Ibid., p. X.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Franz Kafka

The World of Franz Kafka

The world as depicted by Franz Kafka is quite monstrous. The powers of Dasein are haunting man and he is made a prisoner in this 'I—strange' world. The failing man still further fails to pin down as to what it is that he lacks. The world is a mouse-trap. Man is an insoluble riddle—an antinomy between determinism and freedom. "Kafka was extremely prone to see vindictiveness, hatred, malicious spite even at the heart of things. To him even the most torturing of perceptions was not a matter of denial or refusal, but a matter for acceptance."[1] He believed that even the worst would be taken up and transformed : "There are surprises in evil. Suddenly it will turn round and say 'You have misunderstood me'—and perhaps it really is so. Evil transforms itself into your lips, lets your own teeth gnaw against it, and with these new lips, none that you ever had before sat so snugly along your gums—to your own astonishment you pronounce the words of goodness."[2]

A montonous feeling of guilt prevails everywhere, though it is never clear to what the guilt refers. "There is a sense of futility, sometimes even of vindictiveness as inherent qualities in the whole nature of things which makes the horror of Kafka more than the aesthetic thrill which it is in Poe."[3] He was "as old as the Wandering Jew", as he put it himself,[4] never at

1. Ronald Gray (ed) : Kafka—A collection of Critical essays, Prentice-Hall Inc. Englewood Cliff, N. F. 1962, p, 6.
2. Franz Kafka : Wedding Preparation, p. 76.
3. Ronald Gray : (ed.), op. cit., p. 61.
4. G. Janouch : Conversations with Kafka, (London), p. 90.

rest, always swept along like the hunter Gracehus in one of his stories, by the winds "in the lowest regions of death." It was not a season in hell but a whole lifetime. Yet the paradox remains, that like many men and women of religion who have believed themselves damned,[5] Kafka was all the more strongly convinced of the supremacy and perfection of heaven. "If it were conceivable" wrote Simone Weil, "that in obeying God one should bring about one's own damnation, while in disobeying him one could be saved, I should still choose the way of obedience."[6] Kafka's concept of evil was acute, while his belief in God was so equally intense that the two seemed irreconcilable in the limits of one personality. "The world can be regarded as good only from the place at which it was created, for only there was it said : 'And behold, it was good···'"[7] This is the root of Kafka's dilemma, that not to see the world as good is to recognise his guilt acutely, while to pretend to see it as good is to be guilty of hubris.[8] As he wrote elsewhere, "'Evil knows of good, but good does not know of evil."—(Diaries). Goodness sees no division, while evil is constantly aware of it. It is quite baffling to think of any book so pinching to read as Kafka's Diaries—with the current of thoughts like this : "Let the iron rays penetrate you, glide along in the water that is sweeping you away, but stay like that, and wait, erect, till the sun comes streaming suddenly, endlessly in."[9]

The attachment of Kafka's heroes with truth for which they so desparately search can best be seen in the image of cave man of Plato,[10] in a famous passage of his Republic. In a letter (December 16, 1911) Kafka says : "I am separated from

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5. See Kafka's Diaries.
6. Simone Weil : Waiting on God (London, 1951), p. 4.
7. Franz Kafka : Wedding Preparations, p. 109.
8. Ronald Gray (ed.) : op. cit., p. 63.
9. Diaries, 1914-1923, p. 36.
10. Ronald Gray (ed) : op. cit., p. 99.

all things by a hollow space, and I do not even reach to its boundaries." In another (November 19, 1913): "Everything appears to me constructed...I am chasing after constructions. I enter a room, I find them in a corner, a while tangle." And as late as 1921 : "Everything is illusion : family, office, friends, the street, the woman, all illusion, drawing nearer and further away; but the nearest truth that is merely that I push my head against the wall of a cell without door or windows."[11] And in one of his aphorisms he says : "Our art is dazzled blindness before the truth : the light on the grotesquely distorted face is true, but nothing else."[12] Kafka knows two things simultaneously, both with equal assurance : that there is no God, and that there *must* be God. It is the perspective of the curse : the intellect dreaming its dream of absolute freedom, and the soul knowing of its terrible bondage.[13] Kafka once said : "I ought to become eternity, but to find it makes me sad."[14]

Apparently, this is merely an exhaustible echo of the fanfares of despair with which Nietzsche (in many respects a legitimate spiritual ancestor of Kafka) welcomes his vision of eternity.[15] In one of the posthumously published notes on Zarathustra, he says about his idea of the Eternal Recurrence : "We have produced the hardest possible thought—now let us create the creature who will accept it light-heartedly and blissfully."[16] And Kafka on most of the few occasions speaks of happiness, and registers it as a result of successful transformation of torture into bliss. Undoubtedly, it is one of his most

11. Franz (Kafka : Gesammelte Schriften, edited by Max Brod (Prague, 1937), p. 108.
12. Franz Kafka : The Great Wall of China, trans. by Willa and Edwin Muir (London, 1964), p. 151.
13. See Kafka : A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Ronald Gray, op. cit., p. 104.
14. Franz Kafka : Gesammelte Schriften, VI, p. 231.
15. Ronald Gray (ed) : Kafka—op. cit,, pp. 104-105.
16. Nietzsche : Menschliches, Allzumenschliches, XIV, p. 179.

horrible entries (November 21, 1911) : "This morning, after a long time, I again took pleasure in imagining that a knife is turned in my heart." And in 1921, in the account of dream : "There was bliss in my welcoming, with so deep a sense of freedom, conviction and joy, the punishment when it came."[17] A modern scholar observes : "If Nietzsche's Superman is the aesthetic counterbalance to the weight of the curse, then Kafka is its chosen victim. What some of his critics interpret as signs of religious achievement in his later writings, is merely the all-engulfing weariness of a Nietzschean Prometheus;[18] which Kafka expressed in fourth of his Promethus Legends : "Everyone grew weary of the meaningless affair. The gods grew weary, the eagles grew weary, the wound closed wearily."[19]

In accordance with Kafka's conviction, the picture of the world is mythological. Miss Magny puts the point so affectively that it is worth-transcribing her own words : "...we ought not to...provide dialectical constructions for the unfolding of events which should be taken as a *real* account. Otherwise, Kafka is quickly converted into a kind of frustrated philosopher who needs to be explained to himself and to others for lack of sufficient power of analysis and abstraction...that would imply a gratuitous insult."[20] Inspite of her depth and acuity, however, it may be said that Miss Magny's interpretation of Kafka's acceptance of existence can be objectively shown to miss a very essential element. She says : "...The world for Kafka is essentially turmoil, something that is not rational and whose essence therefore only a fantastic tale can express... only the gratuitousness of the event itself, of the *contingit* can

17. Franz Kafka : Gesmmelte Schriften, VI, p. 108.
18. See Ronald Gray (ed) : Kafka, op. cit., p. 105.
19. Franz Kafka : The Great Wall of China, p. 129.
20. C. E. Magny : "The Objective Depiction of Absurdity", from The Kafka Problem, edited bp A. Flores, (New York, 1946), p. 76.

reveal the essential absurdity of things." The torment of man in the world of Kafka has been wisely assessed by a contemporary scholar in these lines : "The lot of loneliness and the struggle to become a part of the community constitute the central problem which runs through all his works; the futile struggle of a man who strives honestly and indefatigably, but is coolly rejected as an outsider by that close-knit organization society, and is stigmatised and pursued by a mysterious guilt which he himself cannot identify."[21]

"Kafka always dreams about matter of the mind, or rather, the dreams dream themselves." In "The stoker", for example, justice dreams a dream of injustice. In "The Penal Colony" humanity dreams of militarism, in The Metamorphosis, and "The judgement" inferiority dreams of active life, fear of life dreams of death. In "The Country Doctor" Christian conscience dreams the nightmare of its own failure. "Kafka does not solve moral problems, his concern with them all is the mumy-like rigidity of the sleeper who dreams them."[22] Kafka stands between Nietzsche and the existentialists : he pictures the world into which Heidegger's man, in Sein unto Zeit, is "thrown", the godless world of Sartre, the "absurd" world of Camus."[23]

The Philosophy of Kafka

Kafka's philosophy is based not on observation of the world but on that of the self. "His symbols resemble a second myth of the Fall, with a difference that they are not set in the context of a God-created paradise man has lost but a man-made hell he cannot escape from."[24] Along with his popular

21. The Kafka Problem, edited by Angel Flores, Gordian New York, 1975, p. 31.
22. H. E. Gacob : "Truth for truth's sake', in The Kafka's Problem. p. 66.
23. Walter Kaufnon : Existentialism for Dostoevsky to Sartre, p. 122.
24. Anthony Throlly : Kafka—A Study, p. 13.

stories, his notebooks are pregnant with aphoristic speculations, which provide a kind of inverted theology to explain the inverted myths of his fiction. He writes : "The observer of the soul cannot penetrate into the soul, but there doubtless is a margin where he comes into contact with it. Recognition of this is the fact that even the soul does not know itself. Hence it must remain unknown. The world be sad only if there were anything apart from the soul, but there is nothing else."[25] The spiritual character of Kafka's world is seen in the following notes :

"What we call the world of the senses is the evil in the spiritual world, and what we call evil is only a necessity of a moment in our eternal evolution."[26]

"Evil is a radiation of the human consciousness in certain transitional positions. It is not actually the sensual world that there is a mere appearance, what is so is the evil of it, which admittedly, is what constitutes the sensual world in our eyes."[27]

Kafka's next aphorism then concludes

"...the whole visible world is perhaps nothing other than a motivation of man's wish to rest for a moment—an attempt to falsify the fact of knowledge, to try to turn the knowledge into the goal."[28]

The redeeming feature of Kafka's inverted theology as far as his writing is concerned, is that he was obviously aware of the fatal paradox embedded in it. "The state in which we are is sinful, irrespective of guilt", he writes; and in the same vein : "The fact that there is nothing but a spiritual world deprives

25. Franz Kafka : Hochzeitsvorbeteitungen, p. 93.
26. Franz Kafka : Aphorism 54, p. 44.
27. Kafka : Aphorism 85, pp. 49, 102.
28. Ibid : 86, pp. 49-103.

us of hope and gives us certainty."[29] In support of the religious outlook of Kafka, the observation of a reputed critic is worth mentioning. "Kafka's ability to pronounce upon the predicament of the modern intelligence, and above all to symbolize this in stories that have religious profundity and the archaic surrealism of myth, may have been due to still deeply Jewish feeling for the God-ordained character of life."[30] Aphorism begins by declaring: "We are sinful not only because we have eaten the Tree of Knowledge, but also because we have not yet eaten the Tree of Life." Kafka's story, "A Report to an Academy", is a sincere attempt in depicting the predicament of human being, though it has never aroused much enthusiasm among his critics. To Charles Neider "'A Report to a Academy'...aside from its bright satirical tone and its empathy for the ape, is merely an exercise, whose function is to satirize the spiritual in man. The education of the ape, his transformation into a human being, depends upon a system of repression and destruction of memories. Kafka, like Swift, implies that man is a beast."[31] The comparison with Swift is implicit also in Brod's brief comment: "Or, what is still more horrible (than the degradation of "The Metamorphosis"), he lets the animal be raised to the level of a human being, but to what a level of humanity, to a masquerade at which mankind is unmasked."[32] This interpretation, that the ape is in some way a satire of humanity, is approved of by Harbert Tauber, who writes that the ape "is really a picture of the everyday man who expands himself in the superficial, who cannot fulfil his being and realize it in freedom, but whose first commandment is to adapt himself."[33]

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29. Franz Kafka : Aphorism 83 and 62. 30. Ibid.
31. Charles Neider : The Frozen Sea (Oxford, 1948), p. 81.
32. Max Brad : Franz Kafka—A Biography, tr. by G. Humphreys Roberts (New York, 1947), p, 135.
33. Herbert Tauber : Franz Kafka—An Introduction of his works tr. by G. Humphreys Robert and Roger Senhouse (New Haven, 1948), p. 135.

In "Observations of Kafka" James Burnhum defines Kafka's metaphysics : "His world is split by the absolute Manichean division between light and darkness, spirit and Matter...As with all Manichean, the ambivalence remains. He (Kafka), longs for Matter, for the evil natural social world,—at the same time that he denies it; he is appalled by spirit even when he must seek it absolutely." Kafka's 'Hunger-Artist' represents Kafka's doctrine : "There is only a spiritual world; what we call the physical world is the evil in the spiritual one, and what we call evil is only a necessary moment in our endless development." "A Hunger-Artist" is a kind of critique of this doctrine. Matter here triumphs over spirit. "Instead of cosmology, Kafka inherited psychology—the irrational internal universe of Freud and Jung, for the rational external universe of Aristotle, there was the subtle anguish of Kierkegaard. All these influences shaped his outlook.[34]

The Torment of Man : The Burrow of the Individual and the Labyrinth of Man

"In "The Metamorphosis" we come across the powerlessness and loneliness of the individual who, when he becomes aware of the hypocrisy of his existence faces a barren death of an insect. Those whose heads and hearts were tortured have been able to imagine Kafka myths. "Kafka's imagination verges on madness, but a law of sobriety or consummate art dominates his writing. It is through dry, minute details that Kafka creates the impression of reality with unreality. The world evoked by him is often improbable, but it exists."[35] Kafka furnished his background and themes when he burried himself as an animal burries itself in its hole. Along with the expression of man's

34. Donald Peace : 'The Castle : Kafka's Divine Comedy', in Kafka To-day, p, 167.
35. R. M. Albers and Pierre De Boisdeffre : Kafka : The Torment of Man, trans. Wade Baskin, Vision Press Ltd., Saxone House 74 A, Regent Street, London 1967, p. 54.

inner loneliness in the face of an empty heaven, he expresses man's inner loneliness. In this sense "The Burrow" is a media of such stories. Here loneliness is withdrawal into oneself, alienation of self in a limited pseudo-self created for oneself. In the same way, the employee in "Bachelor's Misery" becomes entrenched and isolated, and "A Hunger Artist"—a man who exhibits himself in a sealed cage of fair—and gives himself to the absurd ideal of fasting, until he dies the death of an insect.

Each human being takes refuge in his own meticulous labyrinth. The primordial truth is that each individual is a prison. People construct around themselves in order to hide themselves the gigantic walls of a molehill : "Hiding places are numberless, deliverance is unique; but there are as many possibilities of deliverance as there are hiding places."[36] No exit is to be found. "Each man is attached to his own little dwelling, hutch, burrow, routine, possession; but the fastidious mania that possesses him transforms this small enchanted world into a frightening labyrinth."[37] Kafka achieves something resembling a universal "metaphysical" resonance : "Each human being is singular and called upon to act by virtue of his singularity, so he must take a liking to it."[38]

With the ambition of expressing common universal anguish, Kafka always chooses a narrow, definite and limited character. By depicting the plight of animals and their fallen consciousness, Kafka expresses all-engulfing terror of human being; and as a Gnostic and Manichean when he states that *evil is the fall in a form of incarnation that becomes progressively darker.*

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36. Frank Kafka : Notebooks, November 18, 1917,
37. Franz Kafka : The Torment of Man, p. 56.
38. From Notebooks : French translation in "Cashiers divers et fecuilles volantes", in Praparatifs de noce ā la compagne (Paris; Gallimard, 1957), pp. 209-358, quoted in Kafka : The Torment of Man, p. 56.

"There is nothing except a spiritual world; what we call the sensible world is Evil in the spiritual world and what we call Evil is merely a momentary necessity in our eternal evolution,"[39] This type of concept is the Gnostic and Cabbalistic vision which Hugo had popularized.

From Allegory to Legend : Myths and Influence of Kafka :

Behind *'The Castle'* an impression of naked reality compels us to go through it. Kafka's witness, his friend Max Brod, sees the inaccessible castle as the mystery of God's rule and divine grace : 'The Trial' as a symbol of impenetrable divine justice. The only truth is that Kafka sought deliberately to present us an insoluble enigma. The great Kafka's allegories are not interpretations of existence; they are the very 'images of existence'. The problem of meaning of life cannot be said to have a solution. He defines the values and logic of life in terms of what they are *not*, knowing that what they *are* is undiscoverable, indefinable, forever in question. "It is incumbent on us still to study the negative; we are already given the positive."[40]

In psychopathology the compulsive acts of a neurotic patient are described as 'alloproxy', but in the case of Kafka it might be used as a corresponding 'allology'. In the 'Investigation of Dog' he describes this double life : "If I now think back", the dog relates, "and recall the times when I still lived in the dog's community...a dog among dogs, I find that here, even since that time, something has been wrong, there was a small breach somewhere, and a slight feeling of discomfort overcame me even on the most venerable occasions." Then one day he meets a pack of dogs whose scent he will never forget. He asks them various questions, but "They did not answer, acting as if I

39. "Meditation on Sin, Suffering, Hope and the True Way". French translation in Preparatifs de noce ā la compagne, pp. 35-62.

40. Franz Kafka : Notebooks, November 18, 1917.

were not there," He wants to lead his own kin to these eastern Jewish dogs, but they shake him off.

The Religious Meaning of Kafka's Literature : The Theme of Arrival

Martin Buber says that Kafka's attack on divine providence is made from within the certainty of the unity of Israel, by virtue of which nothing whatsoever can detract from God's splendour : "If the whole world should tear the garment of His honour into rags, nothing would be done to Him ?—surely the highest conceivable law is that which is given by Him to the world, not to Himself : He does not bind Himself and therefore nothing binds Him."[41] Kafka, Buber believes, was writing this within tradition, ready to say anything that might seem blasphemous, so long as it was true, in the certainty that 'from the darkness of heaven the dark ray comes actively into the heart.' 'Paradise is still there', Buber continues, and that means it is also here where the dark ray meets the tormented heart'.

Max Brod says that while the novels and stories of Kafka describe men as having lost contact with 'the Indestructible', the religious thought of Kafka shows him as recognising the metaphysical kernal of the world. Kafka, writes Brod, is "a religious hero of the rank of a prophet who wrestles for his faith against a thousand temptations, yet is essentially certain of heaven and of the transcendental." While these two currents in Kafka occasionally flow together, at other times they are poles apart, Brod holds, and yet Kafka can never be understood unless both currents in him are recognised and taken account of.[42]

According to Kafka, knowledge of good and evil is a

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41. Martin Buber : Two Types of Faith, 1951, reprintrd in R. Gray (ed), Kafka—A Collection of Critical Essays, pp. 157-62.
42. Max Brod : Franz Kafka : Galuben und Lehre, Winterthur 1948, p. 7.

possession acquired by human beings, as the *Bible* says, at the Fall from the Paradise. By virtue of the Fall, men have become basically equal to one another in this kind of knowledge : each knows what is good and evil, but each is convinced that his own knowledge is greater than that of others, and "we seek precisely in this (knowledge) our own advantage."[43] In other words, each imagines he has the basis for becoming as God, in fulfilment of the serpent's promise 'ye shall be as gods', and this is what Kafka calls the 'comfortless horizon of the evil man', for the evil man "believes he sees his godliness in the very recognition of good and evil." Kafka introduces the idea in the whole story of 'The Penal Colony' that there is, for the modern man, no way out. The essential point is, perhaps, that there never is any glorious rebirth. "Only here", he says of this world, "is suffering. This is not to say that those who suffer here will be raised up elsewhere on account of this suffering, but that what in this world is called suffering, in another world, where it remains unchanged, and is bliss."[44] By 'freed from its opposite', Kafka may mean 'freed from any conception that a world of happiness or liberation from suffering could 'possibly exist'. In these circumstances, presumbly, Joseph K's final words 'like a dog' ring on into the future life, in which Kafka seems to have strong belief.

Kafka sometimes seems not to be adamant to paradoxes and mystical assertions. Occasionally he seems to speak of enduring suffering until relief comes. "A first sign of enlightenment beginning is the wish to die. This life seems unbearable, another life unattainable. One is no longer ashamed to die, one begs to be taken out of the old cell, which one hates, into another which one will come to hate later on. During all this, a trace of the belief is still present, that during the transfer the Lord will come along the corridor, look at the prisoner and say "The man is not to be imprisoned again. He is to come to

43. Ibid. : Aphorism, No. 86.

44. Ibid : Aphorism, No. 97.

me."[45] Kafka's hero "K", does not 'live' (if we take Heidegger's definition of living as 'being in the world'): he merely passes his days waiting in attendance on the capricious authority of the masterful world within. Many of Kafka's fables as well as his novel America begin with scenes of arrival rather like the one in The Castle; and each of these attempts to arrive ends in failure."[46] For example, Kafka says, "I no longer have the illusion that everything is only a beginning, or has not yet begun..."[47] And 1922 : "In my office people still calculate as if my life were really only just beginning, but meanwhile I have come to the end of it."

Life as perceived by Kafka is a constant accumulation of guilt and conscience—a vicious circle. The stages in this vicious circle of moral torture are as follows : A man feels himself excluded from the world and consequently, does not know where his obligation lie. This ignorance gives rise to a bad conscience making him unable to feel any rights either. Being deprived of rights, he is in the wrong which intensifies his moral anguish. Ultimately, his moral anguish places him outside the world.[48] The entire freedom for Kafka is nightmare. Life is a strenuous process of repetition. The living are negative prisoners : 'not shut in but shut out'. What the soul of Kafka hungers for is not redemption from the world but redemption from not living in the world. Whereas the socialist wishes *to create* a paradise, Kafka is concerned only with the problem (in his phrase) of 'getting into' it. In his 64th Reflection, Kafka speaks of banishment from paradise as eternal, but goes on to explain that the experience of loss and therefore the actuality of paradise is in some sense ever present : "Bani-

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45. Ibid : Aphorism, No. 13.
46. Gunther Anders : Kafka, trans. A. Steer and A. K. Thorlly; Bowes and Bowes, London, 1960, p. 22.
47. Franz Kafka : Diary 122, 1921.
48. Gunther Anders : op. cit., p. 31.

shment from paradise may be final, living in the present inescapable, but, the eternity of the process (or, to put the matter in temporal terms : the eternal repetition of the process) makes it nevertheless possible not only that we might be able to remain constantly in paradise, but that we actually are there constantly."[49] Kafka has no interest in the kind of 'earthly paradise' to which so many political movements have aspired.

The Objective Depiction of Absurdity : Kafka and Dostoevsky

The world as conceived by Kafka is basically turmoil and irrational, and whose essence may be expressed through fantastic tale. Kafka holds that we are responsible not only for what we have willed and for what we have *done* but also for our indiscretions, our secret desires, our very misfortunes.[50] Manifold examples may be quoted from primitive religions as the "ancestral guilt" of the Old Testament, the "Stigma" of the Greeks, the predestination in crime in certain accursed families, as in the case of Oedipus and the Atrida. Like the characters of Greek tragedy, the characters of Kafka are motivated severely by the sense of hidden guilt : "Something analogous, perhaps to the sense of original sin, with the difference that it is we have committed the sin. In Kafka, the sin is almost always relegated to the past; often its nature is never clarified : the tale begins with the punishment, and what one has alone to deserve the punishment, and even whether he does deserve it, remains unknown."[51] The work of Kafka resolves itself into a kind of mysticism without God. His characters seek, almost always in vain, and by unusual and fatal means involuntarily. The most typical story which may be quoted in this respect is 'The Hunger-Thirst", the story of a professional "Hunger-Artist'. The strange union of realism and mysticism gives Kafka's work its exceptional value. The genius of Kafka lies in perceiving the meanings even in the trivial thing which we

49. Ibid : p. 90.
50. Angel Flores : The Kafka Problem, op. cit., p. 87.
51. Ibid., p. 88

no longer perceive. We are deprived of having the hardihood to open wide our eyes; being alien to the world, we cannot understand it.

The work of Dostoevsky has been the first to make us feel the terrible imprisonment of stone and lime. Because of realistic approach towards life, the literature of post-war period has been characterised as "*literature of asphalt*." The novels of Dostoevsky and Kafka are really as critic has said "*novels of human solitude*". Dostoevsky and Kafka's characters live in the rooms which do not belong to them : their thought and their manner of existing are nothing but a magnetic ebb and flow set free from their brain. The cosmos of Dostoevsky's creatures is a monad of bricks and lime, and it is known to all that monads have no windows. Because of their narrow field of activities the characters perceive only shadows and believe that these are the only "reality of life', thus renewing the Platonic myth of the cave. "Kafka has forgotten that the sinful fruit of good and evil has been plucked from the tree of science, and has identified the greatest fault of the moderns with the reduction of the concept of eternity to the sole dimension of time."[52] In comparison to Kafka, Dostoevsky's conception of the eternal is more abstract and perhaps the only just and possible one; man for him is not the "detained" (a temporal criterion), but the "reclusive" (a spatial criterion) the secrets of the universe.

The Penal Colony

The story consists of symbolical meaning. The entire world is a Penal Colony. Humanity sobs and mourns under the cruel yoke of authority. The story is thinly disguised allegory of the crucifixion. This was certainly in Kafka's mind. The hints dropped about the Old Commandment and the young officers give them a relationship as between Jehovah and Christ, to a certain degree. As Austin Warren says : "The earth is a Penal

52. Ibid., p. 112.

Colony, and we are all under sentence of judgement for sin. There was once a very elaborate machine of scholastic theology, for the pronouncement of sentence, and an elaborate ecclesiastical system of its administration. Now it is in process of disappearance : the Old Commander (God) has died, though there is a legend which you can believe or not, that he will come again."[53] Speaking historically, by Kafka's day, the Resurrection has become virtually an impossibility for many theologians. Albert Schweitzer describes, in the concluding paragraphs of 'The Quest for Historical Jesus', the scene before and after the death of Christ in terms so similar to Kafka's that Kafka must surely have read the passage and deliberately alluded to it : "There is silence all round (Schweitzer writes). The Baptist appears and cries 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand'. Soon after that comes Jesus, and in the knowledge that He is the coming Son of Man lays hold of the wheel of the world to see it moving on that last revolution which is to bring all ordinary history to a close. It refutes to turn, and He throws himself upon it. Then it does turn ; and crushes Him. Instead of bringing in the eschatological conditions, He has destroyed them. The wheel rolls onward, and the mangled body of the one immeasurably great Man, who was strong enough to think of Himself as the spiritual ruler of mankind and to bend history to His purpose, is hanging upon it still. That is His victory and His reign."[54] To some extent, he expresses scorn, though the story, for the easy ways of modern civilization, represented by the ladies of the officer's mess who send secrets and other comforts to the prisoners, but are never at hand when the executions take place. In this, as a reputed critic, Dr. Pasley points out, Kafka must have had in mind the passage from Nietzsche's 'Geneology of Morals' in which ambiguous praise is given to the idea that pain is one

53. Austin Warren, in The Kafka Problem, p. 70.
54. Albert Schweitzer : The Quest of Historical Jesus, London 1920 (2nd edition), p. 368.

of the great teachers of mankind : "There was never any lack of blood, torment, sacrifice, when man considered it necessary to imprint anything in his memory ; the most painful sacrifices and pledges (including sacrifice of the first born) and the most repulsive mutilations (for example castractions)—the most cruel rituals of all religious cults (and all religious are, at bottom, system of cruelties)—all this had its origin in that instinct which divined pain to be the most powerful aid to memory."[55] And unlike Kierkegaard, Kafka seems to insist here that there is no rising again from the abyss.

The Trial

A glorious illustration of the complex inter-relation of authoritarian and humanistic conscience is Kafka's 'The Trial'.[56] The hero of the book, K., finds himself "arrested one fine morning" for a crime of which he is ignorant. The entire novel deals with K's attempt to plead his case before a mysterious court whose laws and procedure he does not know. He realizes emptiness and sterility and feels guilty without knowing why. He asks the inspector who arrests him all kinds of questions about the court and his chances at the trial. He is given the only advice which can be given in this situation. The inspector answers : "However, if I cannot answer your question, I can at least give you a piece of advice. Think less about us and of what is to happen to you; think more about yourself instead." Ultimately, he is sentenced to death and executed. The novel symbolizes K's rebelliousness toward authorities. "The novel is written in dramatic, symbolic language; all the events are concrete and seemingly realistic, although they actually refer to inner experiences symbolized by external events. Looked at from this angle, the novel would represent the theological view point most akin to Calvin's theology. Man

55. Nietzsche : Zur Genealogie der Moral, 2 Abhandlung, 3 Absatz.
56. Erich Fromm : Man For Himself—An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics, pp. 171-172.

is condemned or saved without understanding the reason. All he can do is to tremble and to throw himself upon God's mercy. However, in one point the authorities in the Trial differ fundamentally from Calvin's God. Instead of being glorious and majestic, they are corrupt and dirty."[57]

The struggle against destiny reduces man to an animal level. Man's life must take place exclusively in the world over which man has power : his own spirit. "The fact that only one world of the spirit exists, takes hope from us and leaves us certainty : "those are the words of Kafka in which extreme renunciation is mingled with extreme triumph. In all modern literature, Kafka's performance probably most deserves the term, Dantesque. On the basis of the pitch of profundity and the strength of intellectual background, 'The Trial' is firmly grounded in the rigid and elaborate theology and philosophy. "The anguish that pervades this book, "Andre Gide wrote of the Trial, "is at some moments almost intolerable, for how should one not say, this hounded creature is myself ?"[58]

The Castle

'The Castle' is a case book of abnormal psychology. It is hard to see how 'The Castle' can possibly be called a religious allegory with a pilgrim of the type of Bunyan's as its hero. There is, in fact, no pilgrimage to be watched in The Castle, and the progress not merely "remains in question all the time", but is not even possible, unless we agree to call progress what Kafka once described in his fable of the mouse : "Alas", said the mouse, "the world is growing smaller everyday. At the beginning it was so big that I was afraid, I kept running and running, and I was glad when at least I saw wall far away to the right and left, but these long walls have narrowed so quietly that I am in the last chamber already, and there in the corner stands the trap that I must run into."

57. Ibid.

58. Andre Gide, Diary, 28 Aug., 1948.

"You need to change your direction", said the cat,[59] and ate it up.

Of the two points on which Kafka and Bunyan, according to Edwin Muir's introduction, are agreed: "That the goal and the road indubitably exist, and that the necessity to find them is urgent", only the second is correct, and indeed, to find them is so urgent for Kafka that life is impossible unless they are found. But do they exist? "There is a goal, but no way; what we call way is only wavering",[60] is what Kafka says about it. All the time soul is preoccupied with the power of Evil. Life itself is the incarnation of Evil: "Knowledge of the diabolical there can be, but not belief in it, for there is nothing more diabolical than what exists."[61] Kafka's world is a universe of absurdity through which the human intelligence is groping. Kafka's entire work is dominated by the theme of judgment, sentence and acquittal. Everyman has to undergo judgment and is liable to punishment because of the simple fact that he lives and must die. His conclusion is that man is a prisoner who cannot escape his fate. This fatalism is expressed nicely in "The Next Village." There is no way out. The human mind cannot even penetrate the meaning of forces that holds us prisoner and, as a result, there is nothing to do but to yield. 'The Castle' is not allegorical, but a symbolic novel. The symbol is what it represents; the allegory represents what, in itself, is not. The statue of a blindfolded woman, holding a pair of seals, is an allegory of justice; bread and wine are, for the Christian communicant, *symbols* of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Through out his whole life Franz Kafka remained in negativity, in the state of not-possessing and not-knowing, but invisible forces drove him like a hunted animal to search for God and for the lost Law of God. "The chase passes through me and

59. Franz Kafka : The Mouse.
60. Edwin Muir : Introduction to Kafka and Bunyan, p. 145.
61. Franz Kafka : The Great Wall of China, p. 157.

tears me to pieces—but somewhere rescue is waiting, and the chasers lead me there."[62] In evaluation of Kafka's contribution Austin Warren has put it in : "Kosmos Kafka", Kafka is "not a moralist and reformer but a man of religion. The problem is one of accepting the universe, of learning, by means of pathos, humour and irony, to tolerate it. The true painful sense of life as mystery can be transcended by reducing mystery to a kind of pattern. You don't solve the mystery, but you segregate it and give it status, you learn to live with it." This was Kafka's treatment, his economy of chaos.

A Critical Estimate

The study of human existence as made by Kafka is one-sided. He has touched the only darker side ignoring the brighter side altogether; as a critic observes : "Kafka's conception of existence is defective, because it is inherently unstable... Kafka's picture constitutes a decided advance over that given us by contemporary naturalism, for Kafka has no desire to deny the evidence of experience which point to dimension of existence which transcends it. But he could not and would not surrender his method to the demands of rationality and leave us with a vision of the world which both artistically and philosophically represent an image. The change of attitude generated by the crisis opens to the subject large ranges of hitherto unexpected possibilities as to the nature of existence."[63] In his literature of ceaseless quest, centainly no problem is solved, no satisfactory answer to man's plight is offered. Edwin Muir has correctly observed, "The greatness of Kafka lies not in his having solved the problem, which would be absurd, but rather in his having realized it as it has never been realized before, illuminating it with a power of imagination and thought unexampled in his time." In the same tune another critic pours his feelings thus : "If Kafka", as Philip Rahr

62. Franz Kafka : Diary of March, 1922.
63. Ronald Gray (ed.) : op. cit., p. 145.

suggests, "arouses in us a sense of immediate relatedness, of strong even if uneasy identification, it is because of the profound quality of his feeling for the experience of human loss, estrangement, guilt and anxiety—an experience in "The Use of Myth in Kafka and Mann" says, "He does not end with submission or surrender. The quest in Kafka is also an inevitable and persisting feature of man's way. In its persistence lies the promise of the quest," Along with wide experiences of human predicament, the experience of emptiness is one of the central themes of Kafka. The theological interpretation of 'The Trial' and 'The Castle', which claims, following Max Brod, that these novels deal with K's relation to the divine order, and Erich Haller's contention in 'The Disinterested Mind' that it is not the divine order but to the realm of Satan both force Kafka's new wine into old skins. Kafka does not suggest that his bureacracies are subject to any over-all purpose, whether benign or malicious. In fact, he exerts all his very considerable power to suggest that they are not."[64]

The following statement made in the context of existentialism, is equally applicable to the leitmotiv of Kafka's view of the world : "a philosophy that denies signs altogether and conceives of man's status amidst reality as that of a total stranger. It holds that considered in themselves, the things around us are meaningless; that they have no message for us; that knowledge does not lead to wisdom."[65] In the same way, Stephan Spender writes that Kafka is not interested in discovering a metaphysics but in penetrating a reality to discover a system of truth. The verbiage of the "divine" approach serves only as a fog to distort the truth.[66] There is a critic of the Marxist

64. Walter Kaufman : The Owl and Nightingale, From Shakespear to Existentialism, Faber and Faber Limited, 24 Russell Square London 1959, p. 316.
65. Helmut Kuhn : Encounter with Nothingness, (London : Mathuen and Co., p. 28.
66. Angel Flores (ed) : Kafka Problem, Gordian Press, New York, 1975, p. 433.

school, Edwin Berry Burgum, who unfortunately makes many unfounded and unsupported assertions, e. g., "...his attempt to escape a dominating father left his adolescence stranded upon a fluctuating shoals of the Weimer Republic."..."his own diseased personality symbolized the disease at the heart of German society"..."he takes us into the personality structure itself, remaining unconscious of its nature since he shares it"..."since Kafka's last stories are almost exclusively devoted to his hallucinations"; "that Kafka's anxieties have passed the norm and become psychotic in 'The Burrow' is obvious" : "this rare example" (The Burrow) of successful communication of psychotic content", "K's murder symboliges the final ascendency of fascism..."[67] Friedrich Beissmer takes the view that what Kafka says by means of his stories is never actually said, but is suggested, as the obverse of the words, used, or as the unexpressed silence hovering in the background.[68]

The world of Kafka's story is one of the mystery, the mysterious being obtained by a realism pushed to the extremes. As a critic of The Castle points out, Kafka subjects his details "to a transmutation which makes them to compete with each other in enveloping us with some weighty secret." The weighty secret remains a mystification for many readers, even for Einstein. "I could not read it for its perversity", he is reported to have remarked upon returning a Kafka novel to Thomas Mann, "The human mind is n't complicated enough."

67. Ibid., p. 435.

68. F. Beissner, Kafka de Dichter, passin.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Fyodor Dostoevsky

Man in Quest of Revolution, Socialism and Freedom

Perennial problems of philosophy concerning human life were discussed in literary perspective by Dostoevsky. Above all, "he devoted the whole of his creative energy to one single theme 'man and man's destiny'. He was anthropological and anthropocentric to an almost inexpressible degree."[1] To all intents and purposes, the literature of Dostoevsky knows nothing outside man, nothing even of the things which bind him to the external world in the stream of objective life. Strakhor, who was well-acquainted with Dostoevsky, writes of him : "All his attention was upon people, and all his efforts were directed towards understanding their nature and character. People, their temperament, way of living, feelings, thoughts, these were his sole preoccupation."[2] For Dostoevsky, "man does not belong to the objective world-order of which Dante's man was a part. Modern man has confined himself to the surface of the earth and enclosed himself within a purely human universe. God and Satan, Heaven and Hell were definitely relegated to the regions of the unknowable as having no communication with this world, until at length they were deprived of all reality."[3] In the 'Letters from the Underworld' Dostoevsky made many things clear about human nature. "It is extreme antinomian, and irrational; man is overwhelmingly attracted towards unre-

1. Nicholas Berdyaev : Dostoevsky, tr. Donald Attwatter (Living Age Books, Meridian Books, New York, 1957), p. 40.
2. Quoted in Nicholas Berdyaev : Dostoevsky, op. cit., p. 40.
3. Ibid., p. 48:

asonableness, towards a lawless freedom, towards suffering."[4] Dostoevsky's anthropology shows human nature to be in the highest degree dynamic. "Man's stormy restlessness is mainly because of the polarity of his nature, to the shock of colliding contraries. Dostoevsky does not follow the foot-prints of Plato and other mystics, who believe that the soul consists of unity, peace and brilliance."[5] He holds that human nature is burning with the fire of passionate agitation, for polarity and antinomy. Coming to Nietzsche, we find that there is a clear difference between Nietzsche and Dostoevsky who, before him, had shown that the loss of man by the way of self-deification was the inevitable goal of Humanism. Going a step ahead, Dostoevsky recognised that this deification is illusory, and for a better replacement, he explored the vagaries of self-will in every direction, and saw the light of Christ. Nietzsche, on the contrary, was dominated by his concept of Superman and it killed the very pristine image of real man in him. "For Nietzsche there was neither God nor man but only this unknown man-god. For Dostoevsky there was both God and man : the God who does not devour man and man who is not dissolved in God, but remains himself throughout all eternity. It is there that Dostoevsky shows himself to be a Christian in the deepest sense of the word."[6]

Dostoevsky realized that he might remain an insoluble enigma unto himself. This is what he writes to his elder brother Mikhail, on 16 August 1839, shortly after the death of their father : "My soul is closed to the violent outbursts of the past. It is as calm as the heart of a man guarding a profound mystery." And further he says : "Man is a mystery. It has to be divined, and if you will spend a lifetime in doing so, then don't say that it was a waste of time; I am studying this mystery, since I want to be a man." It was revealed to him

4. Ibid., p. 50.
5. Ibid., p. 57.
6. Ibid., pp. 64-65.

already in his youth that "fate can manifest the true will of Providence when it affects us with the irresistible power of our whole nature."[7] While in jail in Omsk, he became fully convinced that his personal fate was dependent on the Will of Providence. "Natural science recognises only phenomena in spaces and time interconnected by innumerable chains of causes and effects by which the individual is so tightly hemmed in that he does not even dare to claim for himself the dignity of a free agent."[8] Dostoevsky has raised this question in "Notes from Underground" : "Where from shall I take primordial causes to lean on ? Where—the grounds ? I practise thinking, and, therefore, any primordial cause drags another still more primordial one immediately in it wake and so *ad infinitum*. This is the very essence of all consciousness and thinking."[9] Dostoevsky was convinced that, apart from the endless external physical world, there existed yet another infinity which man might discover within his own consciousness, wherein a solution of the crucial problem of human freedom ought to be sought. "The first great experiment in the series devised by Dostoevsky for the exploration of the ways and means at the disposal of modern man in his struggle for the survival of human freedom is recorded in the story of Rastoevsky. As a criminologist, Dostoevsky has taken the problem of crime and its consequences seriously. A celebrated critic of Dostoevsky remarks : "Instead of solving the problem of freedom, positivistic individualism deprives it of meaning and precipitates the disintegration of individual consciousness. Raskolniko's apocalyptic dream in his Siberian prison puts the seal on his philosophy : it expresses his original idea and the crime engendered by it is as a symptom of the general mental disarray of the age, and is a stern warning against the worst

7. Dostoevsky : 'Letter to his brother of 19 July, 1840.
8. A. Steinberg : Dostoevsky (Bowes and Bowes Publishers Ltd. 42 Great Russel Street, London, 1966), p. 98.
9. Dostoevsky : Notes from Underground, Notes, etc. Part I,v.

things to come. If no heed were to be taken of this and similar warnings—this is the message conveyed by Rashkolniko's nightmarish vision—the whole of mankind would be engulfed by universal infectious madness resulting in a war of all against all and of everyone against everyone else.[10] Salvation may hinge on the survival of a few pure souls "predestined to incept a new human race and new life on the rejuvenated and purified earth-"[11] Probably all the attempts made by Dostoevsky aimed at finding out 'the secret of life'. "In all the German "Naturphilosophe", in Gothe's cosmic poetry, in Schiller's "noble and beautiful", and in the social novels of Balzac, Dostoevsky was searching for a single thing: man and his secret."[12] The duality in human nature struck him in his very youth. In 1838 he wrote to his brother: "The atmosphere of man's soul consists in fusion of heaven with earth; and man is a kind of illegitimate child. The law of man's inner nature is beyond him. It seems to me that our world is a purgatory for heavenly spirits who have been saddened by a sinful thought. It seems to me that our world has been given a negative significance, and from a lofty, fine spirituality, only satire has come forth...How faint-hearted is the creature..."[13] Dostoevsky's concept of revolution involves an antinomy. He has denounced strongly the falsehood and unrighteousness that give birth to revolution.[14] He pointed out in theme a sound spirit of Anti-Christ and ambitions to make a god of man. Nevertheless, he is not a conservative or a reactionary in the current sense; but he was revolutionary-minded in a deeper sense. "Dostoevsky holds that when freedom deteriorates into narrowly self-will it

10. A Steinberg : Dostoevsky, op. cit., p. 100.
11. Dostoevsky : Crime and Punishment, Epilogue. II.
12. Konstantin Mochulsky : Dostoevsky—His Life and Work, trans. Michael A. : Minihan Princeton University Press, p. 17.
13. Quoted in Konstantin Mochulsky, p. 17.
14, Berdyaev : Dostoevsky, op. cit., p. 138..

will lead to revolt and revolution by a fatal destiny of men who have repudiated their divine origins. Revolution is not conditioned by outward causes and circumstances but is determined interiorly : it is an indication of a disasterous alteration of man's original relationship with God, with the world, and with his fellows."[15] What he pointed out in the destinies of individuals, he felt also in the destinies of people; the question whether "everything is allowable" is put before society as well as to particular person and the same roads that lead an individual to crime lead society to revolution. "The nature of "the revolution" was for Dostoevsky primarily a question of socialism. The problem which socialism presents was always in the forefront of his preoccupation. "Socialism", he wrote, "is not only a problem of labour or of what is called the fourth class but is even more concerned with atheism, a modern incarnation of godlessness, the tower of Babel built without God, not to raise earth to heaven but to bring heaven down to earth."[16]

Dostoevsky holds that the undercurrent "principle of socialism is 'disbelief' in God and in the immortality and freedom of the human spirit. Therefore does the socialist religion welcome the three temptations that our Lord refused in the wilderness-the temptation of stones turned to bread, of the kingdoms of the world, and of social miracle." Dostoevsky, further explains that "it is not a religion for free sons of God but for slaves to necessity; children of the dust whose spiritual primacy has been snatched away from them. If life has no absolute, if there is no eternity, then there is nothing left for men to do but to emulate Versilov's Utopia, get together and organize world-happiness."[17] Socialist religion is summed up by the 'Grand Inquisitor' : "All the millions of human creatures will be happy...We shall make them work, but in their spare time we shall organize their life like a children's game, with children's songs and cantas and

15, Ibid., p. 136.

16. Quoted in Berdyaev : Dostoevsky, op. cit., p. 138.

17. Ibid., p. 141.

innocent dances. We shall allow them even sin, knowing they are so weak and helpless—We shall give them an unexciting modest happiness suitable to the feeble creatures that they are."[18]

For Dostoevsky the theme of freedom is inseparably related to man and his destiny. Human pathos is a pathos of freedom."[19] "The dignity of man and the dignity of faith, require the recognition of two freedoms, freedom to choose the truth and freedom in the truth which cannot be identified with goodness or truth or perfections : it is by nature autonomous."[20] Liberty with Dostoevsky was "the manifestation of a new spirit. Man was escaping from external forms and by dint of purity and strenuous efforts finding light within himself; and consequently the new world was revealed."[21] Dostoevsky unhesitatingly says that the Christian world has not known a more passionate defender of liberty of conscience : "The freedom of their faith was dearer to thee than anything," says the Grand Inquisitor to Christ, and the words were as applicable to Dostoevsky himself: "Thou didst desire man's free love... Man must freely decide for himself what is good and what is evil, having only thine image before him as a guide instead of the rigid law of old"[22]—It is Dostoevsky's own profession of faith. He stigmatized "miracle, mystery, and authority" as means of bearing down man's conscience and curtailing the freedom of his spirit against which Satan directed his attacks when he tempted our Lord in the wilderness. The conclusion of his dialectic is that freedom as it develops cancels itself out, cumpulsion and an evil necessity are lying in wait for it.

Dostoevsky further explains that once a man has set his foot upon the road of self-will and self-affirmation, he must sacrifice

18. Quoted in Berdyaev : Dostoevsky, p. 141.
19. Ibid., p. 67.
20. Ibid., p. 69.
21. Ibid., p. 75.
22. Quoted in Berdyaev : Dostoevsky, op. cit., p. 78.

the primacy of spirit and his original freedom and become a plaything of necessity and compulsion. "Boundless liberty leads me on to boundless tyranny,"[23] says Shigalov, and that has been the evolution of all revolutionary freedom. The whole of Dostoevsky's work is a ceaseless attempt to solve the problem of evil and freedom which would be summed up in a paradoxical form : "The existence of evil is a proof of the existence of God. If the world existed wholly and uniquely of goodness and righteousness there would be no need for God, for the world itself would be God. God is, because evil is. And that means that God is because freedom is."[24]

The Humiliated and Wronged

In the frame-work of two melodramas—one sentimental, the other romantic—there is inserted a profound ideational design. The spiritual experience of penal servitude is translated into the language of artistic images. It can be called *the shattering of idealism*. Before penal servitude, Dostoevsky was an idealist, an Utopian, a socialist, a humanist. All these "isms" descended from Rousseau's axioms "man is by nature good." After penal servitude, belief in "natural goodness' was lost. All the heroes of 'The Humiliated and Wronged', except one, are good and virtuous, and this one easily vanquished them. If "natural goodness" is impotent, then is it goodness ? Is it perhap that what seemed goodness in the daydreams of his youth is not goodness at all ? Then one has to expose its lie, tear off its mask. It is not the "good" who judges the "evil" one, but the "evil" who judges and condemns the "good".

Notes from Underground

It is said that life itself arranged for Dostoevsky the experiment from which his philosophy developed. His first impressions of penal servitude were terror, surprise, and despair. He under-

23. Ibid., p. 82.
24. Ibid., p. 87.

stood that "the whole significance of the word 'prisoner' denotes a man without a will" and that all the peculiarities of penal servitude are explained by one idea, "the loss of freedom". The censorship committee was concerned by the description of several "licenses" that had a peace in the Omsk jail : white bread, Vodka, smoking. Dostoevsky sent two pages of "supplement" which did not go into any edition. This reflection summarises the main idea of the book : there is no higher torment for a man than the loss of freedom. "What is bread ! Bread is eaten in order to live, but here there is no life ! Try, build a palace. Furnish it with marble, pictures, gold, birds of paradise, hanging gardens, every sort of thing...and enter it. Why, perhaps, you may never even have the desire to come out ! Perhaps as a matter of fact, you might not go out ! Everything is to be had ! The best is the enemy of the good. But suddenly a trifle ! Yours palace is enclosed by a fence, and you'll be told : everything is yours, delight in it ! But only do not go one step away from here ! And believe me at the same moment you'll want to be rid of your paradise and to step over beyond the fence. Moreover, all this magnificence, and this luxury will even torment your suffering. I will become offensive to you, precisely because of this splendour."

The underground is the natural culmination of dreaming. The dreamer having been romantic for forty years—remained seated in his corner, like a mouse to recount what he has experienced as thought in his angry solitude. The underground man's social and historical condition is defined by the same marks which earlier characterized the dreamer's state. This is "one of the representatives of a generation still living", i. e., an intellectual of the "Petersburg period of Russian history," poisoned by European culture, divorced from the soil and the people, an historical type who "not only can, but also must exist in our society." The author imputes to him the crime which earlier he had imputed to the dreamer : a betrayal of *living life*. "...We all have lost the habit of life. We have

lost the habit even to such an extent that at times we feel, a certain loathing toward actual *living life*...Why we have nearly to looking upon actual living life as a toil, almost as an obligation...Why, we do not even know where that which has life is living now, such a thing is, what name it bears." To the stillborn, who "for a long time have been born not of living fathers", to the homunculi out of test tubes, there is always opposed that same foggy—mistical idea of "living life." But the historical mark is easily removed; the hero is not only in the past, but also in the present, not only "I" but also "we". Consequently, the underground man's paradoxes are not the whims of some half-mad eccentric, but a new revelation *of man about man*. The underground man is not only split in two, but is also without character; he has not been able to become anything; "not evil, nor good, nor an infamous scoundrel nor honourable, nor a hero, nor an insect !" And this is because "the man of the 19th century must and is morally obliged to be a creative preferably narrow-minded." Consciousness is a sickness, leading to intertia, i. e., to a "Conscious sitting-with-arms-folded." Thus Dostoevsky poses the problem of contemporary Hameletism. Consciousness kills feeling, corrupts the will, paralyses action. "I exercise myself in thinking, and consequently with me every primary cause immediately dreams after it another still more primary, and so on, into infinity." For the new Hamelet there remains one occupation : "intentional pouring water through a sieve." From consciousness comes inertia, from inertia there is boredom The underground existence becomes fantasy; there is a game in front of mirror. The underground man turns a prostitute's soul with noble speeches; he talks ardently, sincerely, goes as far as a "throat-spasm", and at the same time not for a minute does he forget that all this is a game. He gives Liza his address, but is terribly afraid that she will come. The voice of the onlooker says in him : "And again, again to put on this dishonourable, lying mask." The voice of the actor objects : "Why dishonourable ? What dishonourable ? I was speaking sincerely

yesterday. I remember, there was then genuine feeling in me..." But such is the nature of self-consciousness : to break everything down into "Yes" and "No"; what "directness and sincerity" can there be a game before a mirror ?

His investigation of consciousness brings him to a conclusion regarding its perversity. "I swear to you, gentleman, that to be overly conscious—this is a sickness, a real, out-and out sickness." It is better to an abnormal man than a normal animal. Thus in 'The Notes' the sick consciousness is revealed to us as a human tragedy. Dostoevsky is defending man from the inhuman philosophy of necessity. With a boldness not inferior to that of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, he rises up against the "stone wall" of impossibility. Reason sees the greatest wisdom in bowing down to necessity; can one really agree with the laws of nature, the consciousness of the natural sciences and the axioms of mathematics ? Hegel's word "reason" very placidly crushes individual persons under the wheels of its triumphal chariot; the poisoning of Socrates and Galileo's burning do not affect it in the least. To reason's declaration : "It is impossible", the underground man answers defyingly : "don't want to" and "I don't like it." "Lord God", and cries, "and what do I care for the laws of nature and arithmatic, when for some reason that these laws and twice two is four displease me ? Of course, I will not break through such a wall with my forehead if I really have not the strength to knock it down, but I am also not going to be reconciled to it simply because it is a stone wall, and I don't have enough strength."

The whole meaning of human existence—the whole meaning of human history lies in the self-assertion of the *irrational will* ("wild caprice, mad fancy"). Man is eternally condemned to go somewhere, but he has no desire at all to arrive there; he suspects that the end, once attained, is something in the nature of a mathematical formula, i. e., death. The underground man ends his investigations of the will with the taunt : "In a word, man is structured comically; there is obviously a joke contained

in all this." The paradoxalist scoffs at the *tragedy of the will* which has been opened before him. 'Notes from Underground' is the greatest attempts at a philosophy of tragedy in the world literature. The malicious despair and intrepid cynicism of the underground man unmasks all the idols, all the "sublimating frauds", all the "noble and beautiful", all the comforting illusions and salutary fictions, everything by which man has enclosed himself from the "dark abyss".

Evil : Crime and Punishment

According to Dostoevsky freedom degenerates into arbitrary self-will which leads to evil, and consequently evil culminates in wrong doing.[25] Crime has been a subject-matter of Dostoevsky's work and because of his sound expression of crime he established himself as a thoroughgoing criminologist. In his opinion, there is nothing in common between the soul of man and law of the state, that "frozen monster". Dostoevsky showed the injustice of shrewd law in the examination of Mitya Karamazov and the accompanying proceedings. He was deeply shocked at the hungry soul and had least temptation for all the empires of the world: and in this sense he is a thoroughly Christian. Dostoevsky had a firm belief in the redemption and regenerative power of suffering. Human life is the expiation of sin by suffering. Unbridled freedom has opened the way to evil. Man is condemend to pay the price.[26] Dostoevsky has tried to convey his moral and spiritual message through his characters. Man has to go through his 'spiritual process, through freedom and evil to redemption'. "Neither a man nor a nation can live without a 'higher idea', and there is only one such idea on this earth, that of an immortal human soul; all the other 'higher ideas' by which man live, flow from that... The idea of immortality is life itself, the definitive formulation and the first source of the truth and integrity of conscience."

25. Ibid., pp. 89-90.
26. Ibid., p. 95.

Thus Dostoevsky speaks of immortality in the Diary of a Writer.

Raskolniko, the prominent character in 'Crime and Punishment' is a nocturnal being. He is a proud spirit of darkness, and the shadows of gloom have engendered his dream of power. Life on earth, illuminated as it is by the sun, is alien to him; he is cut off from the "consciousness of day". But now the "idea" serves to press the theoretician into action; he has to emerge out of the twilight of abstract thought and enter into life, has to comfront reality. The sun unmasks his helplessness and weakness. "He is not even capable of murder". He commits blunder after blunder, and as a moth is drawn to a candle, he flies into the nets of Porfiry Petrovich. In Dostoevsky, the sun is a symbol of "living life" which triumphs over the still-born theory. Raskolniko enters the old woman's room and finds it brightly illuminated by the setting sun. A terrible thought flashes across his mind : "And so the sun will be shining like this then too !" We feel that the criminal's horror when faced with the sun, portends his ultimate decay and downfall. The theme of 'Crime and Punishment' is the resuscitation of the art of ancient tragedy in the form of a novel. Raskolniko is nothing but a new embodiment of the myth of Prometheus' revolt followed by a tragic downfall in the course of struggle with Fate. Ultimately, Raskolnikov's "heart has grown troubled !"; he has stopped believing in God. For Dostoevsky, atheism reverts invariably to the deification of man. If there is no God, then I myself am God. The "strong individual" sought to free himself from God—and he has succeeded. Freedom from God shows itself as sheer demonism; renunciation of Christ, as *Slavery to Fate*. After having traced the course of atheistic freedom, the author tells us his religious world-outlook : 'there is no freedom other than freedom in Christ; he who does not believe in Christ stands subject to the power of Destiny.'

The Idiot

The theme of 'The Idiot' is a natural but organic growth

of Crime and Punishment. Raskolniko lost his faith, his "heart was muddled", and was so terribly affected that he wanted to "transgress" the moral law. The author, in the light of Raskolniko has shown the crisis of 19th century Russian consciousness. Whatsoever happens in his way is not a personal or a national phenomenon; but a clear reflection of the condition of the entire world. The Russian spirit, not fettered by tradition experiences the world drama most intensely. This is why, inspite of all their national singularity, Dostoevsky's contribution has a universal significance. In The Idiot; all the characters are drawn into this crisis. The "positively beautiful individual", Prince Myshkin, alone stands opposed to the "dark forces" and perishes while struggling with them. In The Idiot, all fatal contagion has affected everyone, all the souls are ulcerous, all the foundations are unstable. The world of The Idiot is quite horrible and more tragic than the world of Crime and Punishment. The whole atmosphere is poisonous. "People rush about in a fever, talk in delirium, groan, and quash their teeth.' As if two novels were two stages of the same illness. In the first novel, the illnesss is in germ, in the second, in the full development. Again, we come across a peculiar contradiction between despair and hope, disbelief and faith in The Idiot. The entire novel is constructed on contrast. If there is darkness, there is hope of light. If there is danger of death, then resurrection is expected. Dostoevsky is not confined to the description of a city, not a portrayal of manners, but he is a chronicler of events that are unexpected, sudden, amazing. In one of his letter to Maikov we find the remarkable sentence : "Being more a *poet* than an *artist,* I have perpetually adopted themes beyond my own powers," In the hands of Dostoevsky human feeling are transformed into passions, passions into men, men express themselves in events.

The Diary of a Writer

In the 'Diary of a Writer' Dostoevsky's years of serious reflections on the ultimate destinies. of mankind are concen-

trated in a few aphorisms which are strange enough for their lasting effect. Here is what he writes in The Diary (November 1878:. "I assert that the consciousness of our own utter inability to help or to bring, if only some, benefit or relief to suffering mankind, while at the same remaining completely convinced of this suffering, can even transform the love of mankind in your heart into hatred for it...I declare (again still for the time being without offering proofs for it) that love for mankind is even altogether unthinkable, unintelligible, and altogether impossible without concomitant faith in the immortality of the human mind...Without being convinced of his own immortality, man's ties with the earth are severed...In a word, the idea of immortality—this is life itself, living life." Out of these reflections grew the idea of Ivan Karamazov. He is a representative of atheistic humanity of "distant and remote love", he is opposed by Alyosha, the Christian humanist, "the bearer of immediate love for one's neighbour."

The writer was fully acquainted with the fact that "paradise on earth" is a dream, and a "most incredible" dream, but for this futile dream he was ready to surrender his life...The Utopia of the "earthly paradise" is the mysterious source of his inspiration. The picture of the "earthly paradise", drawn by the ridiculous man is an attempt to unfold in words the 'mysterious content of ecstasy'. The story of man's fall from grace follows the picture of paradisiacal bliss. It is depicted mythologically, as the sin of the "ridiculous man". "Here there occurred something so awful", he relates, "something so horribly real that it could not have been concealing the full truth, but now I will complete my story. The thing is that I debauched them all!"

The outbreak of evil and its spread is depicted with jolting force. "I know nothing", confesses the hero, "that I was the cause of their faith into sin. Like a *filthy trichina*, like an atom of pestilence, infecting whole nations, so I myself infected all this happy earth which was sinless before my crime." Both in

'The Dream of Ridiculous Man' and in Crime and Punishment' there is described the origin of hostility, discord, bloody wars. "Unity" in love is replaced by dividedness in hatred..." The Dream of a Ridiculous Man is the key to Dostoevsky's complex religious ideas and world outlook. He had no confidence in the other-worldly bliss of bodiless souls, but in the coming of the Kingdom of God' on earth, in the realisation of man's unity in love. He believed in the *resurrection and transfiguration of the flesh.*

"...People can be beautiful and happy, without losing their ability to live on the earth !..." The "earthly paradise" is not the socialist anthill, not a humanitarian Utopia, but the Second Advent of Christ. It is true, the "ridiculous man" does not mention the name of Him who will gather around Him the family of man. But for him this "final truth" was already said by the "deist" Versilov, who dreamed the same dream of paradise. "I have always ended my picture", he confesses, "with a vision, as in Heine's—Christ on the Baltic Sea, I could not get on without Him...And then the scales would, as it were, fall away from all their eyes and there resounds the great hymn of the new and last resurrection..." Dostoevsky's earthly paradise "opens like a mystical flower on the "holy" land, in the bossom of Mother Earth—the Mother of God. Therefore the theme of children is united in his work with the theme of land, forms a consecrated Trinity : paradise—children—the earth.[27]

The Brothers Karamazov

Dostoevsky through The Brothers Karamazov represents the struggle with God in all its demonic grandeur. On the one hand, the Inquisitor rejects the commandment of love for God, on the other hand, becomes a fanatic of the precept of love for one's neighbour. The same person who spent his time in worshipping Christ, has moulded his direction now to the service of

27. See July-August instalment of the Diary, for 1876, in the article The Land and the Children.

mankind. Gradually, his atheism is inevitably turned into hatred. Having lost faith in God, the Inquisitor must also lose *faith* in man; for, these two faiths are indivisible. The silence of Christ is a justification of man and the affirmation of his divine—human dignity. The anthropodicy is crowned by a theodicy. The Inquisitor reproaches the Saviour for "having imposed an intolerable burden of freedom upon mankind, having demanded an impossible perfection from it and, consequently, having acted as if He did not love it at all. Dostoevsky makes the greatest spiritual disclosure : the free personality or man is revealed only in Christ."[28] Dostoevsky has successfully given expression to his paradoxical thoughts concerning Catholicism, Socialism and Christian concept of the Kingdom of God. "Dostoevsky's thought that in The Legend he was unmasking Catholicism's deception and the lie of socialism; but his exposure went further and deeper. The Inquisitor's Kingdom of the Anti-Christ is built on miracle, mystery and authority. In the spiritual life the principle of domination always stems from the evil one. Never in all world literature has Christianity been advanced with such striking force as the *religion of spiritual freedom*. The Christ of Dostoevsky is not only the Saviour and the Redeemer, but also the sole Emancipator of man."[29]

Ivan Karamazov likes to live more and more, though he faces disorder and upheaval everywhere. He hates escapism and explains his views thus : "...if I lost faith in the order of things, if were convinced that everything is disorderly damnable devil-ridden choas, if I were struck by horror of man's disillusion—still I want to live."[30] The dialogue between Ivan and Alyosha justifies the suitability of the universe to live in. The outsider of Dostoevsky is aware of the abyss behind his existence. Yet still, he is haunted by the unquestionable thirst for

28. Dostoevsky : The Grand Inquisitor.
29. Ibid.
30. Pro and Contra - Brothers Karamazov, p. 273, The Modern Library, Random House, 1950.

life full of creativity. "Behind man lives the abyss, nothingness; the outsider knows this, it is his business to sink claws of iron into life, to grasp it tighter than the indifferent bourgeois, to build to will, inspite of the abyss."[31] Ivan declares that he believes in the existence of God, his wisdom and his creation, though he has no access to Him. Inspite of all these, he is unable to accept this universe of God wholeheartedly. And in this way he returns the ticket which leads to the city of God. He says: "It's not that I don't accept, Alyosha, only I must return Him the ticket."[32]

The Grand Inquisitor : Christ and Anti-Christ

The dialectic of Dostoevsky depends on antithesis of the God—man and the Superman, Christ, Anti-Christ, and human destiny is actualized in the clash between them. The discovery of the idea of self-defined belongs to Dostoevsky. He has given shape to his concept of human destiny in the person of Kirilov in The Possessed. He says; "The new man will come happy and proud. He won't care whether he lives or does n't live—he is a new man. He will overcome evil and suffering, he will be god—for then will no longer be any god...God is the woeful thing that makes death frightening. The man who conquers pain and fear will himself be god. Then there will be new life, new men, new everything ..Man will be god and his physical appearance will change. The whole world will be altered, things will be different, thoughts, feelings, everything...Whoever dares to kill himself is god. So anyone can bring about that there should be no god and that nothing should exist." Kirilov does not believe in an eternal life to come but in an endless life here and now; when "time stops short it will be eternity", that is, when "time is absorbed by the spirit." He will "set a term to the world" whose name will be "Superman". "The God-man ?" asks Stavroguin. "No", answers Kirilov, "the man-god, the

31. Wilson : The Outsider, p. 197.
32. Dostoevsky : Brothers Karamazov, p. 291.

super-man. All the difference is in that." Deification of man ends collectively in the systems of Shigalev and Grand Inquisitor, individually such spiritual experience as that of Kirilov. Kirilov wants to save man and give him immortality, and for that end he offers himself as a sacrifice : he kills himself. But the death is not a Christian death, a salvation-giving calvary : it differs from the death, of our Lord at every point. Christ fulfilled the will of the Father, Kirilov fulfils his own will; Christ revealed eternal life in another world, Kirilov wills eternal life in this. The only divine man, who is not mortal is Jesus Christ, but man sets himself at the opposite pole to the God-man, he wants both to differ from and be like him, and Dostoevsky gives us in Kirilov the ultimate result of this ambition.

A Critical Estimate

Dostoevsky procured brilliant success "in the art of depicting the harsh gamut of human suffering—the anguish of the human soul and the human spirit. The corporal punishment of convicts; the violation and humiliation of women's dignity; the maltreatment of little children by their parents and, finally the beating of helpless animals—these jar the nerves of any reader of Dostoevsky who is not intimately callous".. "The sum of human suffering is a source of unmitigated anguish to the writer, depriving him of all peace of mind and goading his principal characters to action."[33] Ivan Karamazov says to Alyosha : "I was going to talk about human suffering in general but, it would be better to dwell on the suffering of children alone. It will cut down the volume of my argument of nine-tenths but I'd rather speak only about them. I have only taken the little children to make my point obvious. I shan't say a word about the rest of mankind's tears which have saturated the earth from its crust to its centre." As a critic, Nicholai Dobrolyubor wrote, Dostoevsky is always "in distress over man."

33. A. Belkin : Fyodor Dostoevsky's Stories, Introduction, (Progress Publishers, Moscow), p. 17.

In portraying man's humiliation, Dostoevsky reveals abysses in the human soul that seem frightening to contemplate. His characters display every kind of distorted form of self-assertion. Dostoevsky created a psychological and even philosophical grosteque all his own. It is significant that Dostoevsky expressed the following idea in his Diary of a Writer : "Follow up some fact of real life, even one that is not so vivid at first glance, if you have the strength and vision, you will find in it a depth denied even to Shakespeare. But the crux of the matter is : who has that vision and capacity ? It is not only in creating and writing works of art that one has to be an artist in one's own way, but in being able to notice the fact." With the intention of comparing two great thinkers of Russian literature, we find that Dostoevsky's psychological approach was different from that of Leo Tolstoi'[34] Dostoevsky was concerned not so much with psychological analysis as such as with the fresh possibilities it offered for realistic art. "I am called a psychologist", Dostoevsky wrote, "but that is not true; I am merely a realist in the highest sense, i. e., I depict all the depths of the human soul."

The struggle between good and evil in the human soul, as described by Dostoevsky, made a profound impression on Albert Einstein, whose opinion of Dostoevsky's writings is remarkable in many respects : "The Karamazov Brothers made a powerful impression on me. It is one of those books which smash the mechanical idea of man's innerworld and of the frontiers between good and evil."[35] Dostoevsky has faith in man and his future. His boundless love of life is forcefully expressed in a dialogue between Ivan and Alyosha in The Karamazov Brothers : "I love the sticky leaves and the blue skies of spring ! It's not with the mind, or through logic but with one's inner self, one's guts that one loves them, loving all

34. Ibid. p. 18.

35. Quoted from Ilya Ehrenburg : Collected Works, vol. 9, Moscow, 1967, pp. 522-523 (in Russian).

one's fresh-born young strength...Do you get any of this gibberish of mine, Alyosha ?' 'Only too well, Ivan : it is indeed with the inner self, with one's guts that one wants to love—how well you' ve put it, and I'm terribly glad you have such an overwhelming desire to live...to believe everyone must above all learn to love life ?'

" 'To love life more than its meaning ?'

"Indeed, yes. To love it more than logic, as you've put it. Undoubtedly before logic, it's only then that I'will understand what it really means.'"[36]

In 1839 the eighteen-year-old youth Dostoevsky wrote to his brother : "Man is mystery : if you spend your entire life trying to puzzle it out, then do not say that you have wasted your time. I occupy myself with this mystery, because I want to be a man." We find no landscapes and pictures of nature in Dostoevsky's novels. He portrays only man and man's world; his heroes are people from contemporary urban civilization fallen out of the natural world-order and torn away from "living life." He was describing not the abstract "universal man", contrived by J. J. Rousseau, but the real European of the 19th century with all the endless contradictions of his "sick consciousness." "The Russian novelist first discovered the real face of the hero of our "troubled time"—the "man from underground" : this new Hamlet is struck by the infinity of doubt, poisoned by reflection, doomed to a lack of will and inertia." Dostoevsky, at the end of 19th century felt himself the only European who understood the significance of the whole tragedy, which was being experienced by mankind. He alone "wept real tears". And now the "old idea" was gone and mankind was left on earth without God. Kirilov in The Devil declares : "If God does not exist, then I am God." In the place of God-man appears the man-god, the "strong personality", who

36. Quoted in A. Belkin : Fyodor Dostoevsky Stories, op. cit., p. 28.

stands beyond morality, "beyond the confines of good and evil": to whom "everything is permitted" and who can "transgress" all laws (Rashkolnikov, Rogozhim, Kirilov, Stavrogin, Ivan Karamazov). Dostoevsky made one of his grandest discoveries : the nature of man is correlative to the nature of God, if there is no God, there is also no man. A celebrated critic of Dostoevsky has successfully assessed his contribution in the following lines : "Dostoevsky was the herald of the spirit of revolution on its way to accomplishment; he expresses nothing in his work but the impassioned and tumultuous dynamism of human nature. Man in that mood tears himself away from the social order, stops obeying the rules, and enters a universe in another dimension. For with Dostoevsky a new soul and a new perception of the world were born; and he carried this exclusive dynamism of the spirit, this flame-like mobility, within himself."[37] "The worst thing of all", he wrote to Maikov, "is that my nature is too passionate and unrestrained. I always go to extremes; I have exceeded the limit all my life."

37. Berdyaev : Dostoevsky, op. cit,, p. 20.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Nicholas Berdyaev

Formative Influences and Basic Belief

Among other influences which enabled Berdyaev to become an existentialist thinker, three were most important; viz. (i) the Russian Socialism and Marxism, (ii) the cultural renaissance that took place towards the close of the 19th century, and (iii) the religious philosophy of the 19th century Russia.[1] The lasting impact of Western thinkers on Berdyaev was remarkable. The French symbolism, the writings of Ibsen and Nietzsche were popular among the Russians at that time. Berdyaev had his own way of understanding Nietzsche. He read Nietzsche in the light of Ibsen and Ibsen in the light of Nietzsche.[2] He owes to Nietzsche his enlightened vision and exalted realism. In the words of Berdyaev : "Like Nietzsche I ask about the place of creative ecstasy, vision, and prophesy in man's endeavour to comprehend reality. In surrendering to these Nietzsche arrived at the conclusion that God is dead. This conclusion may, indeed, be unavoidable in the experience of human destiny, but in Nietzsche it marked not only the death of God but also the death of man in the advent of the Superman. As to me, I am concerned to show that creative ecstasy, vision, prophesy, and inspiration are a pledge of the living reality of God and man."[3]

Nineteenth century Russian religious philosophy played a

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1. R. Balasubramanian : The Personalistic Existentialism of Berdyaev, (Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, 1970), p. 15.
2. Ibid., p. 17.
3. N. Berdyaev : Dream and Reality, p. 290.

vital role in moulding the views of Berdyaev. "The history of the Russian people, the Russian soil, the Russian air—all had their part in shaping Berdyaev and his thought."[4] Berdyaev was in search of freedom and this was the reason that he was drawn towards orthodoxy as it provided greater freedom than Catholicism and Protestantism. He believed in the divinization of man and interpreted the essence of the orthodox view. "God-manhood embodies the unity and interaction of two natures divine and human, which are one but uncomfused. Man is not subsumed in God, but is made divine and his humanity endures in eternal life."[5] Though the existentialism of Berdyaev differs from European existentialism, yet still, his way of thinking and vision of human destiny established him as a thoroughgoing existentialist. He believes that to-day man is living in his self-created world like an uprooted person. He explains : "My sense of uprootedness and disestablishment in the world, which later I came to express philosophy as objectification, is at the heart of my whole world outlook. From childhood I dwelt in a world unlike the one which surrounded me and only feigned implication in the world of my environment. I was on the defensive against the world and kept watch over my freedom."[6]

Berdyaev holds that the sense of objectification is one of the main reasons of alienation. He believes that intrinsic knowledge is better than extrinsic one. He says : "An existential philosopher should be aware of an identity between his thinking and his personal and the world's destiny. This involves victory, or at least partial victory, over objectification. Existence cannot be regarded as the object of knowledge; it is, on the contrary, the subject of knowledge, or at a still deeper level, it transcends

4. O. F. Clarke : Introduction to Berdyaev (London : Geoffrey Bles, 1950), p. 10.
5. N. Berdyaev : Dream and Reality, p. 182.
6. Ibid. p. 33.

the very differentiation into object and subject."[7] He was in search of knowing the destiny of man and showed lesser interest in defining the objective world. "Objects' and the knowledge of 'objects' have never interested me: what concerns, and absorbs, and haunts me is the destiny of the subject, the microcosmos, in which there stirs and throbs the whole universe, and which bears witness to the meaning of its own and the world's existence "[8] Neither Berdyaev followed the foot-prints of his contemporary existentialists blindly nor was deeply influenced by them. "I was an existentialist", says Berdyaev, "even before I came to know Kierkegaard's writings. Neither Kierkegaard, whom I did not read not until late in life and whose morbid exaltation of sin is profoundly uncongenial to me, nor Heidegger, nor even Jaspers, had any particular influence on my thought."[9] It claims that his philosophy is "born of spiritual experience, rather than deduced from ascertained and assured premises."[10]

Spiritual awakening is the goal to be achieved. According to Berdyaev, "The flight of the churches and of Christian move ments against the advent of socialism and communism is the worst possible evil which could happen. It is not the fear of communism which should dominate nor the formation of an anti-communist front which would inevitably degenerate into a Facist front. What is necessary is the Christianization of communism at the core of which we must know how to discover the positive elements of social justice."[11] The evalution of revolution made by Berdyaev is different from his contemporary thinkers. "His evaluation of revolution is as prophetic in its

7. Ibid., p. 103.
8. Ibid., p. 103.
9. Ibid., p. 103.
10. Ibid., p. 302.
11. N. Berdyaev : Towards a New Epoch, (London : Geoffery Bles, 1949), p. 46.

range as it is penetrative in its insight."[12] According to Berdyaev, "Revolutions are the destiny, the inevitable doom of nations, and it is impossible to take a superficial view of them, explaining them by external political and economic causes, as both the revolutionaries and the counter-revolutionaries generally do. A revolution is a spiritual phenomenon, though it may and usually does deny the reality of the spirit."[13] As one who does not believe in eternal suffering of man, Berdyaev says : "I can conceive of no more powerful and irrefutable arguments in favour of atheism than the eternal torments of hell. If hell is eternal then I am an atheist."[14] Further he makes his viewpoint clear. "To understand the true aims of man's liberation one must transcend romaticism and classicism, naturalism and alike : and I have endeavoured to do this."[15]

A Spiritual Non-Conformist

Berdyaev, by temperament was a non-conformist. Championing the freedom of the individual and the need for spiritual awakening, he revolted against totalitarianism. The outlook of Berdyaev was wide. He felt interest in all social and political problems which had a bearing on life. In fact, he describles himself as a religious philosopher and aspired for bringing a spiritual awakening.[16] Though Berdyaev had a deep respect for Marx, yet his admiration was not that of a blind follower. In a sense, he was an spiritual Marxist but not an orthodox Marxist. In a materialist interpretation of history, he repudiated the metaphysical implications of materialism.[17] He explains his position in the following lines : "I tried to combine my

12. R. Balasubramanian, op. cit., p. 5.
13. N. Berdyaev : The Destiny of Man (London : Geoffery Bles), p. 263.
14. N. Berdyaev : Dream and Reality, p. 293.
15. Ibid., p. 107.
16. Ibid., p. 325.
17. Ibid., p. 123.

idealism in philosophy with Marx in social questions. I based my socialism upon an idealist foundation, although I acknowledged the truth of many propositions in the materialist interpretation of history. The two types of culture among the greater part of the revolutionary Marxists was a torment to me. I felt this particularly acutely in the years of my exile in the north."[18]

Marxism for which he has a 'soft corner' in the early stage of its development proved hostile to spiritual values. He himself describes how he became reluctant towards Marxist ideology as follows : "I went through a stormy inward reaction also against the second, the great Revolution. I considered the revolution inevitable and just: but its spiritual aspect was uncongenial to me from the very beginning...My refusal to accept the Bolshevike revolution was not so much on social grounds as on spiritual. I expressed this too passionately and often unfairly. I saw all the while the same triumph of the Grand Inquisitor. At the same time I did not believe in the possibility of any sort of restoration and I certainly did not want it. I was banished from Soviet Russia simply and solely because of my reaction in defence of freedom of the spirit."[19]

The Problem of Anguish

Like other existentialists, Berdyaev has discussed the problem of anguish with due emphasis, but, here, the problem of anguish differs from that of other existentialists. Here, the sense of anguish is somewhat more subtle and spiritual than the usual trend. Berdyaev admits that he was subject to the experience of anguish all through his life. He says ; "Anguish points to the world above and is associated with the experience of the insignificance, precariousness and transitoriness of this world. Anguish bears witness to the transcendent and at the same time, to the distance, the yawning gulf that exists between man and

18. N. Berdyaev : Slavery and Freedom (London : Geyffery Bles, 1944), p. 13.
19. Ibid., p. 16 quoted in R. Balasubramanian, op. cit, p. 10.

the transcendent. Anguish is also a longing for another world, for that which is beyond the boundaries of this finite world of ours. It spells solitude in the face of the transcendent; it is the point of greatest conflict between my existence in the world and the transcendent. Anguish can awake my awareness of God, but it can also signify my God-forsakenness. It intervenes, as it were, between the transcendent and the abyss of non-being, of void."[20] In the light of its different manifestations, Berdyaev has pointed out three forms of anguish: viz. (1) the anguish due to the experience of the contingent character of the world of things, (2) the anguish associated with the duality of man's nature, and (3) the anguish of freedom."[21]

The essential nature of man is so vast and many-dimensional that he cannot be contained within the finite world. He is not only of this world of necessity, but also of another world of freedom. "What is significant, according to Berdyaev, is the fact that man knows that he is the meeting point of two worlds."[22] In a passage which is reminiscent of Pascal's portrayal of the dual nature of man, Berdyaev says : "What a strange being-divided and of double meaning, having the form of a king and that of a slave, a being at once free and in chains, powerful and weak, uniting in one being glory and worthlessness, the eternal with the corruptible."[23] A modern Indian scholar of Existentialism holds; "Berdyaev maintains that man can transcend his contingent nature and should aim at such transcendence. His standpoint on this issue is, therefore, different from that of Sartre who dismisses man rather pessimistically as a useless passion."[24] Berdyaev maintains that the dual nature of man is the cause of his predicament but the

20. N. Berdyaev : Dream and Reality, p. 40.
21. R. Balasubramanian, op. cit., p. 102.
22. Ibid., p. 103.
23. N. Berdyaev : The Meaning of Creative Act, p. 60.
24. R. Balasubramanian, p. 103.

same dual nature enables him to root out predicament. And further he explains that 'since there is also the 'divine' in him, it is possible for him to detach himself from this environment' and rise to a vision of things '*sub specie aeternitatis*. In support of his thesis, he cites the creative acts of a painter, a sculptor, a composer, a musician, etc.

Technological Alienation and the Problem of Solitude

Along with other contemporary thinkers, Berdyaev, too, has focussed his attention upon the problem of technological alienation. Berdyaev explains his viewpoint by admitting that so far as the social life of man is concerned, the increase of technological knowledge means greater and greater objectification of human existence. "Man is all the while more and more exteriorized, more and more losing his spiritual centre and integral nature. The life of man is ceasing to be organic and is becoming organized; it is being rationalized and mechanized."[25] Man in technological alienation experiences solitude. He wishes to be left alone—'far from the madding crowd.' Berdyaev says that such a type of solitude can be characterized as 'spiritual exile.' Oppressed by Solitude, man looks upon everything as alien. He feels himself to be "a stranger, an alien without a spiritual home."[26] In order to overcome solitude, Berdyaev gives valuable suggestion. He says "man's longing for knowledge is an expression of his endeavour to overcome solitude."[27] The knowledge which is suggested is spiritual and absolute in nature. "The ultimate unity in which all contradictions and apophatic knowledge—that absolute knowledge which brings about communion with God and Kingdom of God."[28]

Berdyaev distinguishes four types of relationship between the individual and society. Firstly, all the relationship of total

25. N. Berdyaev : The Being and the End, p. 223.
26. N. Berdyaev : Solitude and Society, p. 92.
27. Ibid., p. 96.
28. Ibid., p. 68.

conformity and instinctive adaptation to the social environment. Such type of persons are of 'strong initative instincts', "men who lack all originality of thought and are content to subsist upon a common heritage, a tradition, which might well be conservative, liberal, or revolutionary."[29] Secondly, the individual, though maintaining harmonious relation with society, does not take an active interest in social affairs. Such type of persons may be called indifferentists. In the third type of relationship, the individual who has no social interests experiences solitude. His relation with society is not harmonious and as a result, he is not inclined to revolt against it. "They are neither born fighters nor innovators."[30] We may call men of this type as compromisers. Finally, there is the type of relationship in which the individual, while fighting against the existing social order, is interested in the regeneration of society. Such persons are innovators, reformers, creators, spiritual revolutionaries. Such persons may be called prophets.[31]

Ethical Voluntarism

Berdyaev is out and out an ethical and religious thinker. Like Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, Berdyaev has found his own interpretation of Christianity. In his view, if Kierkegaard's voluntarism goes to one extreme, that of Nietzsche goes to the other. Berdyaev says that "with Nietzsche a new and subtle form of godlessness begins."[32] In the philosophy of Nietzsche 'the death of God' stands for the absence of the old norms of transcendent goodness, truth and beauty, the disappearance of the entire supersensible reality, and the decadence of conventional morality.[33] The madman, who is the mouthpieces of Nietzsche, tells the people assembled in the market-place. "We

29. Ibid., p. 102.
30. Ibid., p. 102.
31. R. Balasubramanian : op. cit., p. 110.
32. N. Berdyaev : Truth aud Revelation, p. 103.
33. R. Balasubramanian : op. cit., p. 117.

have killed God, you and I ! We are all his murderers !' The visible churches, according to the madman, are the tombs and monuments of God. What is the implication of the 'death of God' so far as Nietzsche is concerned? Berdyaev writes : "Nietzsche cannot live without the divine and the sacred, and the God who has disappeared must be replaced by something. To him the superman was a new form of the divine, a supreme value which man must create.'[34] Herein comes the Voluntarism of Nietzsche, yet still, he can understand the motive behind the reasoning. "What Nietzsche saw was the 'petty bourgeois Christianity'. He could not reconcile himself to any form of consolation which comes from the idea of progress, or the triumph of reason, or the possibility of human happiness.'[35] Berdyaev writes about Nietzsche : "He repudiated the Christian God rather because He brings consolation and happiness. Christianity gives a meaning to suffering and that Nietzsche could not endure. To him it meant the denial of the tragic principle. He wanted suffering and he did not want consolation."[36] Nietzsche is of the view that divine will and human freedom are antithetical.

A learned Indian Scholar of existentialism comments : "Like *avidyā*, objectification can be overcome through spiritual realisation or mystic experience can be attained here and now. His unique conception of active eschatology which stands for the realisation of the Kingdom of God here and now is similar to the conception of Jīvan mukti in Advait. The transcendental man of Berdyaev is a Jīvan-mukta."[37] Berdyaev explains : "Transcendental man stands outside the division into subject and object, and, therefore, all the theories which are derived from knowledge of the object can tell us nothing

34. N. Berdyaev : Truth and Revelation, p. 103.
35. R. Balasubramanian, op.. cit., pp 117-118.
36. N. Berdyaev : Truth and Revelation, p. 104.
37. R. Balasubramanian, op. cit., p. 120.

about him."[38] In another passage he says : "Transcendental man is the inner man whose existence is outside the bounds of objectification. It is to this man that which is not alienated, nor determined from the outside, that which marks him as belonging to the realm of freedom."[39] Thus, for a person, who has realised the divinity in him, the external world is no more a prison.

Redemption and Evil

Christianity is the religion of Redemption which presupposes the existence of evil and suffering. "The cause of evil lies in a false and illusory self-affirmation and in spiritual pride which places the source of life not in God but in self, to the annihilation of human personality in so far as it bears the divine image; it constitutes a return to the void from which the world came into being. Pride and egoism lead to the abyss to non-being, and to death.[40] Man falls into illusion by wrong deeds. Instead of believing in harmony he believes in isolation and disunity. Berdyaev explains : "By isolating himself in himself, and by taking as the centre of his life not being but his own self, man is not only separated from God and from the sphere of the divine, but is also deprived of all true riches of his being."[41] Basically, being is a hierarchy and is also affirmed through the preservation of harmony.

Sin is the main cause of the dawn of Christianity. Christianity repeatedly reminds us that man must bear the cross. Berdyaev exhorts us : "If suffering is the result of evil, it is also the path by which we are to be freed from it. For Christian thought suffering is not necessarily an evil, for God Himself, that is God the son, suffers. The whole creation groaneth and travaileth together waiting for its deliverance."[42] In sup-

38. N. Berdyaev : Truth and Revelation, p. 17.
39. Ibid., p. 17.
40. N. Berdyaev : Freedom and the Spirit, pp. 167-168.
41. Ibid., p. 168.
42. Ibid., p. 171.

port of his thesis Berdyaev further explains; "The spiritual nature of man does not merely demand pardon for sin, but rather its final defeat and extermination, that is to say, the transfiguration of human nature. The meaning of Redemption lies in the coming of the Second Adam, the new spiritual man, in the coming of that love of which the old Adam was ignorant, in the transformation of the lower nature into the higher".[43]

Berdyaev believes in the spiritual progress of man. Sacrifice and spiritual discipline remove the horror, suffering and sin. Berdyaev says : "In Christ human nature co-operates with the work of Redemption. Sacrifice is the law of spiritual ascent and with the birth of Christ a new era in the life of creation beings. Adam underwent the trial of his freedom and failed to respond to the divine call by an expression of free and creative love. Christ, the New Adam, makes this response to the love of God."[44]

Study of Integral Man

Berdyaev's existentialist philosophy may be characterised as the philosophy of spirit in view of the fact that spirit is admitted to be the ultimate reality in his system. Though man is in the world, yet, in his essential nature he is not of *this* world. "Man is one of the phenomena of this world, one of the things caught in the *maelstorm* of all things in nature; and man passes beyond this world, as the image and likeness of absolute being transcends all things of the order of nature."[45] Therefore what is important in man is his spiritual experience which makes him 'a break in the world of nature'. God, who is spirit, is revealed only in spiritual experience. Man who is the microcosm is, therefore, the clue to our understanding of

43. Ibid., p. 175.
44. Ibid. p. 177.
45. N. Berdyaev : The Meaning of the Creative Act, (London : Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1955), p. 60.

God who is spirit. In the words of Berdyaev; "Man's consciousness of himself as the centre of the world, becoming within himself the secret of the world, and rising above all the things of the world, is a pre-requisite of all philosophy : without it one could not dare to philosophize."[46]

Man is to be studied as an integral, existential being. The study of the integral man is the proper theme of philosophical investigation. Philosophy, says Berdyaev, is "Primarily the doctrine of man, the doctrine of integral man elaborated by integral man...This doctrine is the exclusive province of philosophy, and not of biology, psychology, or sociology."[47]

The Way to God : The Central Place of Man

Berdyaev holds that man is the link between the phenomenal and the noumenal, between nature and God. "Man is an appearance, a creature of nature and subject of the laws of this world. At the same time man is also a 'thing-in-itself', a spiritual being, free from the power of this world."[48] Further, Berdyaev thinks of the God-man relation in terms of two movements—from God towards man and from man towards God. He tells about the birth of man in God and the birth of God in man. "The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Divine-humanity, in it God is finally born in man and man in God, and this is accomplished in the spirit."[49] Berdyaev says that the revelation of God in the world is an eschatological revelation. He elucidates that eschatology does not mean a passive waiting for the end of this world, but an active transformation of the world here and now. "To bring belief in God within the bounds of possibility and to make it morally possible to accept him, can only be

46. Ibid., p. 58.
47. N. Berdyaev : Solitude and Society (London : Geoffrey Bles), p. 23 & p. 69.
48. N. Berdyaev : The Beginning and the End, p. 81.
49. Quoted in D. A. Lawrie : Christian Existentialism (London : George Allen & Unwin, 1965), p. 43.

done by recognising the truth that God reveals himself in this world. He reveals himself in the Prophets, in his son, in the breath of the spirit, and in the uplifting spiritual aspiration of man."[50]

Berdyaev observes that the God is the embodiment of freedom and creativity. There is no freedom which is not creative, and there is no creativity without freedom. "Creativity is inexplicable. Creativity is the mystery of freedom. The mystery of freedom is immeasureably deep and inexplicable."[51] The creative impulse in man inspires him for the beginning of a new world, for it always calls up the image of something different—something higher, better, and more beautiful than the 'given'. Berdyaev considers that the creative act brings in something new which is not from the world but from the spirit. "From a shapeless stone or lump of clay the beautiful form of a statue is given to us; out of a chaos of words, the verses of Pushkins with all their power to charm. From sensations and impressions all unware of meaning, knowledge is derived, from elemental subconscious instincts and attractions the beauty of moral form takes shape, out of an ugly world beauty is captured. In all this there is something miraculous from the point of view of the world, this given empirical world."[52]

Man, according to Berdyaev, is dual in nature : he is the meeting point of two worlds, the world of nature and the world of spirit. Man knows himself as "the image and likeness of God and as a drop in the ocean of necessities of nature."[53] He is at once conscious of his greatness and power of his worthlessness and weakness, of his freedom and his slavery. "To look upon man as a product of evolution is to miss the real significance in him. Berdyaev points out that the presence of spirit in man complicates the question of man's evolution.

50. N. Berdyaev : The Beginning and the End, p. 152.
51. N. Berdyaev : The Meaning of the Creative Act, p. 144.
52. N. Berdyaev : The Beginning and the End, pp. 173-174.
53. N. Berdyaev : The Meaning of the Creative Act, p. 60.

If we look at man from the biological point of view, we have to say that he regresses rather than progresses."[54] The standpoint of Berdyaev is, "Consciousness has weakened in man the power of instinct and made of biologically defenceless. His organs have not been perfected but weakened by the growth of civilization. He has to think with regret of his lost primeval strength. His organs for attack and defence have become social instead of biological; he relies upon his social environment and its weapons. But this means that his strength has ceased to be biologically hereditary."[55] Berdyaev is not favourably disposed towards the organic view of society. Society is neither an organism nor a personality.[56] It is the objectification of the "We", and so it has no reality, no existence, outside the relation between one personality and another, between the "I" and the "Thou". The "we" in its existentiality is a community, a fellowship, but not society.[57]

Berdyaev holds that to treat man as a rational being is to do less than justice to the nature of man. The Greeks, for example, thought of man as a rational being, as a bearer of reason. The truth is that there is not only reason in man, but there are also feelings and passions. There is no such thing as pure thought. "Pure thought does not exist; thought is saturated with acts or volition, with emotions and passions, and these things play a part in the act of knowing which is not simply negative; they have a positive role to play."[58] Therefore, to say that man is a rational being is to present a partial picture of man.

Berdyaev criticises the Catholic and Protestant views of man on the same account, for they do not consider man as the

54. R. Balasubramanian : op. cit., pp. 66-67.
55. N. Berdyaev : The Destiny of Man, p. 63.
56. R. Balasubramanian, op. cit., p. 68.
57. N. Berdyaev : Slavery and Freedom, p. 104.
58. N. Berdyaev : The Beginning and the End, p. 16.

image and likeness of God. According to the Catholic view, man was, "...created as a natural being, lacking in the supernatural gifts of the contemplation of God and communion with Him; the supernatural gifts were bestowed upon him by a special act of grace. Through the Fall man lost precisely those supernatural gifts, but as a natural being he suffered comparatively little damage."[59] The Jewish-Christian view which considers man as a being created by God in His own image as likeness of God, man is divine. He is the 'other divine'. The Fall which Berdyaev attributes to man's original freedom has not deprived man of his divinity, of the spirit in him. Man has his own part to play in his attaining his salvation and in regenerating the world. "Man has to manifest all the activities of his spirit, all the intensity of his freedom, in order to accomplish what God expects of him."[60]

Summing up the various concepts of man, Berdyaev holds that man can realize his personality only by transcending his subjectivity. Self-transcendence is an inward process and not an outward one. "It is the path not of objective communication but of existential communion. Personality reaches full realization of itself only on this path."[61]

Berdyaev invariably feels that man is in need of spiritual awakening. Man is surrounded by unending gloom which springs up in solitude and forlornness. Prof. Lakshmi Saxena has successfully depicted the views of Berdyaev in these words. "Berdyaev speaks of the importance of 'Solitude' in man's journeying inwards. It speaks of a state in which one has realized the futility of his immersion in the objective and a submission to its incessant, never-ending demands. It is, therefore, a demand for the transcendence of all claims of one's life which hitherto had appeared to be of vital importance."[62] The

59. N. Berdyaev : The Destiny of Man, p. 61.
60. N. Berdyaev : Freedom and the Spirit, p. 209.
61. N. Berdyaev : Slavery and Freedom, p. 29.
62. Lakshmi Saxena : Encounter with Transcendence, op. cit., p. 143.

state of extreme isolation has been successfully described by Berdyaev in the following words : "Man feels himself to be a stranger; an alien without a spiritual home...the fundamental truth holds good : no objective relationship can help the Ego along the path of freedom and communion, whatever their relationship...The Ego longs to emerge from its prison-house in order to meet and identify itself with another Ego : but, at the same time, it must proceed warily for fear of encountering nothing but the object."[63]

Though isolation has a darker side, yet still, it consists of brighter side too. Prof. Saxena has pointed out the significance and its outcome in shaping destiny of man as it has been acknowledged by Berdyaev himself. Prof. Saxena explains : "An agonishing solitude, a sense of alienation and isolation, therefore, is from other than the ordinary perspective amply rewarding. It opens the gate-way to truth and is possible only for the few dedicated souls who live their lives for the fulfilment of their own divine destiny as also that of 'man'. Berdyaev speaks of the origins from which it derives it strength."[64] Berdyaev says : "It springs from man's endeavour to develop his personality regardless of the life of the species. Only when man is alone, when he is overwhelmed by a distressing sense of his isolation, does he become aware of his personality, of his originality, of his singularity and uniqueness, of his distinctness from everyone and everything else. An extreme sense of solitude tends to make everything else appear alien and heterogeneous. Man feels himself to be a stranger, an alien without a spiritual home."[65]

Berdyaev has dreamed of an integral man and elucidating what he means by the "integral man", of man rooted in the very heart of Being", he distinguishes him from "the psychological or sociological man"; for such a man is a "fragment

63. Berdyaev : Solitude and Society, p. 69.
64. Lakshmi Saxena, op. cit., p. 130.
65. Berdyaev Solitude and Society, p. 68.

of nature and of the objective world" and consequently remains a subject to the laws of that world. How and in what way the human personality can be developed and integrity be established has been taken in consideration by Prof. Saxena. She illucidates the standpoint of Berdyaev in these words : "All that we need is to carve out a human personality fully responsible to the demands of man's integral being which means in ordinary parlance a spiritual being. By being a spirit or a person alone does a man fulfil himself existentially; and being a spirit does not mean in Berdyaev getting divorced from all forms of societal living, but making an existential return to in a way wherein the earlier opacities of inter-personal contacts are shed and transparencies made to merge to make life fully satisfying."[66] Berdyaev speaks of integral man and the community life negatively. "The Ego's real triumph over solitude should not be the outcome of any slavish dependence on the objective world, or any acceptance of romantic subjectivity; the Ego must rather win a spiritual victory in the very heart of its Being : it must confirm itself as a personality capable of preserving its identity while in the process of transcending itself."[67]

A Critical Estimate

The concept of human nature and destiny as conceived by Berdyaev differs from other academic existentialist thinkers in many respects. A recent scholar of Indian thought has made an assessment of Berdyaev's contribution in these words : "The personalistic existentialism of Berdyaev focusses our attention on the basic struggle between Christianity and Secularism which has contemporary relevance and calls for a new way of life protesting against all those forces which are detrimental to the freedom of man and spiritual awakening."[68] The ideas of Berdyaev was always anthropological rather than cosmological

66. Ibid., p, 133.
67. Berdyaev : Solitude and Society, p. 75.
68. T. M. P. Mahadevan : Forward, viii in R. Balasubramanian, Personalistic Existentialism of Berdyaev.

in emphasis. Moreover, his fundamental problems are freedom, personality and creativeness. "Philosophical works are of two kinds : some lead us through intricate systems, like unknown lands; others bring us into direct personal contact with the philosopher himself. The books of Berdyaev have always been of the second kind. Instead of separate themes "objects" and fragments of reality, it presents an integral, vital, personal vision of the world in its relatedness to God and to man."[69] To use Berdyaev's own language, all his books, and indeed all his thought, are not "objective" but "existential". "God expects from me a free creative act", he writes in the introduction to his book Freedom and the Spirit. My freedom and my creative activity are my obedience to secret will of God, who expects from man something much more than what is usually meant when we speak of his will...All the forces of my spirit and of my mental and moral consciousness are bent towards the inward understanding of the problems which press so hard upon me. But my object is not so much to give them a systematic answer, as to put them more forcibly before the Christian conscience..." On closer analysis, we come across a gradual development in his thinking. "Berdyaev's thought attains a great intensity when he turns to concrete problems of human life. It breathes love to man along with a passionate concern for his struggles, suffering and tormenting quests, and at the same time faith in man's call to great deeds. Any sense of safety and security is for him equivalent to insensitiveness and indifference to the tragic fate of mankind; it blocks the vision of life and of life's great and unforeseen possibilities."[70]

The works of Berdyaev have a certain limitations. Because of his emotional touch and romantic inclination he does not stand on 'solid ground'. Instead of having confidence in the stable forms and patterns of life, he dreams of future life. He

69. Evgueny Lampert : Berdyaev and the New Middle Ages (James Clarke & Co., Ltd.), p. 24.

70. Ibid., pp. 28-29.

may be characterized as a visionary but not a balanced and reasoned critic of life. "The earth, beneath him is on fire, he lives and thinks in all respects, spiritually and socially, in an age of revolution and carries within him the principle of some great overturn. This is manifest in the notable intense apocalyptic and eschatological tone of his thought."[71]

Berdyaev fails to co-ordinate or synthesize the divine and human principles in a rational system. In his book Freedom and the Spirit, Berdyaev talks of God-manhood not conceptually but rather mythologically. "Christianity is entirely mythological, and indeed all religion is; and Christian myths express the deepest as most central realities of the spiritual world. It is high time to cease being ashamed of Christian mythology and trying to strip it of myth. No system of theological or metaphysical concept can destroy Christian mythology and it is precisely the myths of Christianity which constitute its greatest reality; for it becomes an abstraction as soon as it is freed from them." Here, Berdyaev makes a hasty conclusion by admitting that "naturalism and positivism equally live by myths, whether they be those of material nature or of scientific knowledge."

Berdyaev is pre-eminently concerned with existence as *correlation*, with life as the vital relatedness of man to God (God-manhood) and of man to man. "Man's life is viewed as authentic only in his freedom from the bonds of individualism and self-sufficiency, in his encounter with God, with the world and with other man. Though he is summoned to discover the meaning of life in personal, creative inwardness, yet such a discovery is as much a movement from within *outward* as one from without inward, and thus presupposes objective reality outside man."[72] Berdyaev has not successfully solved the riddle of division between subjectivity and objectivity. His over-emphasis on subjectivity is a clear case of lop-sidedness. Life has not been explained in its fullest and possibly widest dimensions.

71. Ibid., p. 30.

72. Ibid., p. 95.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Conclusion

Existentialism is a sincere attempt to see reality in its naked majesty. The origin of existentialism is a historical necessity. "Because the very existence of man on this earth is menaced, because the annihilation of man, his dehumanization and the destruction of his humanity and of all moral values is real danger, therefore the meaning of human existence becomes our problem."[1] Quite a few critics hold the view that existentialism is a reaction against the dominating influence of technology. We live in an age of technology which binds us to such an extent that we are helpless victim of it. Paul Tillich refers to three characteristic features of Western society as it has developed in the last hundred years. They are : (1) naturalistic mechanism, (2) analytical rationalism and (3) Secularised humanism[2] The danger which modern man faces to-day has been characterized as *technological alienation*.

Existentialists do not agree with the definition of man established by scientific analysis and academic philosophy. The existential thinkers endeavour to define human nature and destiny in modern perspective. Prof. Radhakrishnan is justified when he makes an assessment of existentialism, saying : "existentialism is empirical in its method. While the older empiricists applied their belief to nature, Existentialists apply it to human existence. The Upaniṣhads ask us to know the self : ātmānam viddhi'. The Bhagavdagītā says that of all

1. F. H. Heinemann : Existentialism and the Modern Predicament (London : Adam & Charles Black, 1933), p. 178.
2. Paul Tillich : "Existential Philosophy", Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. V, No. 1, pp. 44-70.

types of knowledge the knowledge of the self is the most important. We must achieve a profound understanding of what is meant to be human. The knowledge aimed at is not psychological knowledge which is after all a species of scientific knowledge. Psychology gives us the mechanism and conditions of existence. It breaks man into a series of fragments which are studied by the different sciences. Man is treated as an object among objects, emptied of spiritual orientation and moral certitude. Instead of individuals science gives us concepts, doctrines. Man becomes a collection of ideas, feelings and desires. A tenis ball is an object but man is both subject and object to himself. Existentialism attempts to study the meaning and values of existence. For this we have to pass beyond science."[3] Existentialism is like the life it pretends to be talking about : lived first, talked about afterwards.[4] And yet, because it is a theory of man, one feels justified in asking, "What sort of a theory of man ?" To reply with Sartre—it is a theory which affirms "the priority of existence over essence."[5]

An existentialist can always be detected by the impact on theoretical distinctions he makes, "especially such distinctions as : the priority of existence over essence, the priority of life over thought, the priority of feeling over conceptualisations The existentialism holds that nothing is more certain, nothing more humbling, nothing less effaceable than the impress of one's own contingency. One may feel with Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov, "Life is only given to me once and I shall never have it again; I don't want to wait for the 'happiness of all'. I want to live myself, or else better not live at all...where is it I've read that someone condemned to death says or thinks, an hour before his death, that if he had to live one some high

3. S. Radhakrishnan : Religion and Culture, Hind Pocket Books, p. 99.

4. Ralph Harper : Existentialism as a Theory of Man, (Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 25.

5. J. P. Sartre : Existentialism, p. 15.

rock, on such a narrow ledge that he'd only room to stand, and the ocean, everlasting darkness, everlasting solitude, everlasting tempest around him, if he had to remain standing on a squire yard of space and his life, a thousand years, eternity, it were better to live so than to die at once ! Only to live, to live and live. Life ! whatever it may be !" This intuition of uniqueness of one's own life bears an imperative to continue to live uniquely as long as one can.

Existentialism as a philosophy presents a definite attitude of looking at life. "It expounds man's search for himself and his potentialities to create his own values in the world. It paves the way for social analysis of problems facing mankind and promotes their solutions towards achievement of social realism. It derives its contents from everyday human experiences and creates facts of human life."[6] Existentialism as a philosophy of existence has been understood in several senses. Opponents of this trend give a gloomy picture of it by disparaging and describing it as "the shocking, the sordid, or the obscene",[7] and the word itself for them is 'nearly meaningless'. Its exponents are "described as perverts and iconoclasts, as philosophic nihilists and artistic freaks."[8] Existentialism had a fertile climate in Germany with its "widening disillusionment and cracking morale under defeat and aerial bombardment mingled with desperate resolution and helpless despair."[9] In France, too, the same wave was blowing with mounting uneasiness. Sudden collapse of this country shocked Frenchmen and made them realise their own existence "in the midst of a world-shattering situation."[10]

6. M. N. Sinha : A Prlmer of Existentialism (Capital Publishing House, Delhi. 1982), pp. 1-2.
7. M. Greene : Introduction to Existentialism, p. 1.
8. Ibid.
9. C. D. M. Ketelly : A History of Modern Times from 1789, p. 501.
10. F. T. Kington : French Existentialism, p. 3.

Existentialism has made many positive contributions to promote the understanding of human existence amidst sufferings and insecurities.[11] It has been viewed by thinkers in different perspectives. Joseph C. Mihalich views it as the type of philosophy emphasizing the personal reality of the individual and treats the existentialist frame of reference as "the individual's own frame of reference in meeting reality—his own fears and hopes and encounters and crises."[12] Fernando Molina defines it as the kind of philosophy which strives to analyse the basic structures of human existence calling "individuals to an awareness of their existence in its essential freedom."[13] According to David E. Roberts, this movement fights against those intellectual and social forces which cripple, stifle or destroy freedom. It reminds man of their most basic inner problems and calls them away "from strifling abstractions and automatic conformity."[14] Fredrick Copleston appears to be quite in harmony with the above views when he recognises the value of existentialism in "drawing attention in a modern context to the human person as a free and responsible subject."[15] Further, in the same tune, Roger Troisfontaines explains "existentialism is a passionate return of the individual to his own freedom, in order in the unfolding of its processes to extract the significance of his being."[16] These views reveal that existentialism is a metaphysical interpretation of the events of the world depending on absolute contingency. It insists that "philosophy should be connected with the individual's own life and experience, with the historical situation in which he finds himself, and that it

11. M. N. Sinha : A Primer of Existentialism, op. cit., p. 4.
12. J. C. Mihalich : Existentialism and Thomism, p. 4.
13. F. Molina : Existentialism as Philosophy, p. 2.
14. D. E. Roberts : Existentialism and Religious Belief (ed) by Roger Hazelton, p. 4.
15. F. Copleston : Contemporary Philosophy, p. 227.
16. R. Troisfontaines : Existentialism and Christian Thought, tr. by Martin Jarretkerr, p. 25.

should be, not interesting abstract speculation, but a way of life."[17]

As against essentialists, existentialists give first place to existence and assert : "Existence precedes essence". For them, man first exists and then he looks at the world, thinks of it and acts in it as an individual. "His contemplations and his actions are possible only because his existence :·existence, thus, is the first principle from which all else flows. It is only latter, by living, thinking and acting that man defines his nature and forms what is called his essence—that which he is and will be."[18] Consequently, man is "like a blank sheet, a *'tabula rasa'*. He never comes in the world as finished product, as ready-made, as well-defined, rather he defines himself in course of his life[19]." Thus, it is clear that the truth of existence is not an objective certainty established by reasoning, rather the individual encounters it in his 'subjective experience' which is the sheet-anchor of identification between 'knowing' and 'being'. "What occasions the individual encounter with his own subjective and individuality is a critical situation in which he is called upon to choose between the given alternatives for a life time."[20] His whole being is involved in choosing the alternative which decides the subsequent course of his life and "it brings him into grips with his own existence".[21] The existential way of thinking has constructed an unbridgeable gap between the theory of existence, and actual existence, and "the theory of existence can never generate or substitute itself for the actual existence which is its own basis."[22] This is the reason that the

17. P. Roubiczek : Existentialism for and Against, p. 10.
18. Walter Odajnyk : Marxism and Existentialism, p. 9.
19. M. N. Sinha : A Primer of Existentialism, op. cit., p. 6.
20. G. Srinivasan : The Existential Concepts and the Hindu Philosophical Systems, p. 3.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.

existentialists attach great value and significance to the individual rather to the society or state or community.

The existentialists construct a demarcating line between subjective and objective truths and pay heed to the former. While explaining the distinction between subjective and objective, Kierkegaard, the chief originator of this movement says, "The majority of men are subjective toward themselves and objective toward all other, terribly objective sometimes; but the real task is to be objective toward oneself and subjective toward all others."[23] Sartre also holds the same view. For him, "it does not mean here belonging to a subjective...That is subjective which cannot get out of itself."[24] Subjectivity is inwardness and is identical with truth and through this subjectivity the individual chooses and makes of himself. Man can never transcend human subjectivity because "transcendence designates the essence of subjects, the basic structure of subjectivity."[25]

Existential revolt cannot be regarded "as a passing fad" rather it is a new and valid school of philosophy. It insists on the fact 'that reason cannot cope with the particular, the contingent', and is insufficient in dealing either with 'individual as unique person' or with 'his freedom and inner commitments'.[26] It speaks of the meaningfulness of life not through arm-chair speculation but through participation in life's problem even in "the agonizing situations of living in times of crisis when day-to-day decisions had to be made."[27] Thus, man's concern is

23. Journals of Kierkegaard, "A concise Dictionary of Existentialism," compiled and arranged by R. B. Winn, p. 69.
24. J. P. Sartre : Being and Nothingness, "A concise Dictionary of Existentialism", p. 99.
25. M. Heidegger : Von Wesendes Grundes, "A concise Dictionary of Existentialism", p. 105.
26. M. N. Sinha : A Primer of Existentialism, op. cit., p. 11.
27. Margarett Chatterji : The Existentialist Outlook, p. 8.

not the problem of contemplation or sterile abstraction but "problem of action".[28] It is no denying the fact that the none but itself can be its parallel. It does not mean that one idea cannot be studied in the light of another. "Life and experience are so complicated that the veins of thought running through them may take devious and opposite paths and yet arrive at the same terminus."[29] It is a well-known fact that rational nature never changes; and the principles of reason remain identical in the various applications. Existentialism, too, is not an exception to this universal law of life and thought.

For atheistic existentialists, the empirical man is competent enough to carve his life out of the old situations in which he finds himself. Theists, on the other hand, believe in the idea of God towards which man transcends. "Unlike theists, atheists believe in complete potentialities of man and as such proving or disproving of God's existence does not arise for them. The achievement of the status of superman (Nietzsche), realization of Being (Heidegger) and attainment of authenticity (Sartre) are some of the allusions to man's striving. Thus, man's striving for Transcendence (theists) or his striving for making himself by exercising his own free choice (atheist) is the very core and crux of the existentialist thinking."[30] Hostile criticism is levelled against existential thinking. A great body of opinion is that it concerns primarily with dark side of human life. It is a kind of philosophical nihilism. Anxiety, anguish, dread, despair and death are the contents with which this trend deals. It lacks systematisation and presents 'fragments' of subjective thinking. Existentialists, for them, are kinds of 'bohemians' or 'sensational-mongers'.

Each individual 'subject', considered from the empirical standpoint, is a 'man-in-the-world', and considered from the ontological standpoint, he is a 'being-in-the-world', and deeper

28. Ibid.
29. P. T. Raju : The Concept of Man, p. 306.
30. M. N. Sinha : A Primer of Existentialism, op. cit., p. 50.

in the awareness of his own being, the more profound is his understanding of the significance of 'inter-subjectivity', as also of Humanism. The theist existentialists regard God as Ultimate Reality, and for the atheist existentialists 'Being-in-itself' is Reality. Thus for Kierkegaard, God' is the Supreme Person, while Jaspers considers God the impersonal Absolute Reality. Then, again, Heidegger characterizes Being as the 'underived genus'—the highest universal and he also speaks of the human Dasein, i. e., the 'being' of the human existent. Sartre, on the other hand, strongly denies the universal, and fixes on the human reality who as the 'for-itself' makes a continuous, self-devised effort for realizing, the In-itself, i. e., his 'real being'. "A philosophy of man, Existentialism is primarily concerned, not with 'all' man collectively, but with 'each' man distributely. It emphasises individual freedom and responsibility, subjective decision and choice, and also urges upon the necessity of self-determined effort by a human being for an inward apprehension of what 'it'."[31]

Now, it seems to be generally accepted that "Existentialism is necessarily a philosophy of pessimism—or at least, of a very limited, stoical kind of optimism. Anyone who opens any one of the many books on the subject becomes immediately aware of a certain atmosphere of gloom."[32] In Helmut Kuhn's "Encounter with Nothingness", for example, the chapter headings give us an immediate sense of this negative content: 'Illumination through Anguish'. One comes to accept senses like this: "The struggle through the slough of despondency is conceived as the first phase of a dialectical movement." Carl Michalson has observed that "existentialism is one of the

31. Sailesh Ranjan Bhattacharya : An Enquiry into the Fundamentals of Existentialism (Firma Klm Private Ltd., Calcutta, 1979), pp. 141-142.

32. Collin Wilson : Introduction to the New Existentialism, p. 14.

magic words of our time. When the word is used it seems capable of powers all out of proportion to its size. It can enchant with curiosity and a passsionate eagerness to know. Or, it can cast a spell of hostility and sometimes even a repressive anxiety to put it out of mind."[33] J. M. Spier says "Existentialism is a philosophy of reaction. It is reacting against rationalism in favour of irrationalism because it defies the subject of existence."[34] Again, he states that this movement is a form of reduction—philosophy which is guilty of tremendous over-simplification concerning the problems of living and being.[35] Spier comments that the existentialist movement has minimised and at times overlooked the richness of life which "God has placed in created reality."[36] He feels that existentialism rejects the revelation of God in the Holy Bible. The author further remarks that existentialist philosophy is a limited one because it views the world only "as a pragmatic object, an object of our human action."[37] Spier summarises the following points of recurrent themes in existential literature; viz., stress on the humanistic ideal of personality and irrationalism, a radical subjectivism as the approach to philosophising, an underlying anthropoligic concern, existence in itself is self-transcendence because man is not what he is, a basic split in man's personality between his authentic and unauthentic possibilities, and more-over, an over-emphasis on 'being-in-the-world'; and the world is defined as the 'sphere of our action'.[38] Mounier summarises the recurring themes of existentialism as follows :

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33. Carl Michalson (ed) : Christianity and the Existentialists, p. 77.
34. J. M. Spier : Christianity and Existentialism, tr, David Freeman, in complete in Bib, pp. 14. ff.
35. Michell Bedford : Existentialism and Creativity (Philosophical Library, New York, 1972), p. 48.
36. J. M. Spier : op. cit., p. 107. f.
37. Ibid., p. 108.
38. Ibid., pp. 110-111.

"The contingency of human being, the impotence of reason, the boundless leap of the individual as typified in the idea, that man is always a 'being-in-advance-of-himself'. Man's estrangement from himself and his continual living at the lower stages of existence (Kierkegaard) or in inauthentic existence (Sartre, Heidegger), man's empirical existence is always threatened. Finally, man is constantly plagued by the 'nothingness' of existence".[39]

George Kneller believes that existentialism has several inherent weaknesses. These are as follows : Firstly, existentialist criticism is levelled at fundamentally stagnant or repressive societies... In a freedom-loving society its preachments are less poignant. Secondly, the attitude of existentialism towards scientific inquiry is not sound. It is not the discoveries of science that are malignant but the uses to which they are put by human beings. Thirdly, its glaring weakness lies in its peculiar understanding of sound values and community relations. Fourthly, the obvious weakness is over-emphasis on inwardness and subjectivity. But introspection and self-analysis cannot take place in a vacuum. To claim that no value system or structure exists is to declare a state of chaos."[40] Further, George Kneller believes that existentialism is not altogether worthless philosophy of life. But, on the contrary, it has its brighter side. Some of them are worth mentioning, viz., "...existentialists have many gifts to offer, among them their cry against individual complacency and their demand for intensive personal commitment. A second contribution originates in its protest against sterile abstractions, pure logic, and objective absolutes, substituting instead on emphasis upon the concrete and the individual. The third contribution is that no doctrine exists that

39, Emmanual Mournier : Existential Philosophies : An Introduction (New York : The Macmillan Company, 1949) pp. 24-50.

40. George Kneller : Existentialism and Education (New York : Philosophical Library, 1958), pp. 153-155.

more greatly exalts the value of the individual human personality. The fourth contribution is stress on the emotional life of man, which is considered to be far more valuable than the so-called intellectual aspects of human behaviour."[41] George Kneller successfully concludes; "...if existentialism has done no more, it has loosened the rigidity and petrifying effect of many forms of intellectualism and impelled us to examine more critically our devotion to traditional subject-matter structure, systematic types of logical thinking, and neat hierarchies of absolutes."[42]

Let us divert our attentiou to some of the prevailing trends of philosophy which are inseparably attached with human destiny and its predicaments, i. e., Marxism, Humanism and Hinduism. There is a similarity between Existentialism and Marxism as they represent a revolt against the rule of thoughts. Like Existentialism, Marxism "rejects imperturbable, impassive contemplation of what exists and actively joins in the struggle against all forms of alienation on the side of the social forces which by virtue of inexorable necessity wage this struggle."[43] Marxists hold that the root of philosophy does not lie in speculative thinking but rather in life itself. Lenin, while decrying the attitude of speculative thinkers, trampled on by the ruling classes and the state they demanded not contemplation, but a struggle for the better order of society.[44] They believe that the emancipation of man is possible only if there are fundamental social changes. Only struggle is the way for the developmental freedom. Thus like existentialists, Marxists also emphasise the importance of freedom in individual's life. For them, too "the freedom of each individual becomes the

41. Ibid., pp. 156-158.
42. Ibid., p. 158.
43. M. B. Mitin: "Marx, Lenin and the Problem of Man", Karl Marx and Modern Philosophy, p. 50.
44. V. I. Lenin: Collected Works, Vol. 2, p. 23.

indispensable condition for the freedom of all."[45] But, on being critical, one mny feel that existentialism and Marxism differ widely from one another. "Marxism has absorbed man and, therefore, lost him; Existentialism tries to revive man in the street, to the individual that Marxism has lost."[46] That is why, Sartre finds obvious faults with Marxists of the present day and charges them with maintaining 'a dialectic without men', and this is precisely what has caused Marxism to stagnate and turn it into a paranoiac dream. "Marxism while explaining the dialectical opposition between 'knowing' and 'being' aspired for existential base. The question of alienation also has not been explained properly in Marxism. This is the reason why Marxism of to-day has become lethargic and ossified. It has developed officialdom within itself and therefore, it needs a dose of existentialism to remove its defects."[47] In this context, the statement of Sartre is worth quoting; "Marx's own Marxism, while indicating the dialectical opposition between knowing and being, contained implicitly the demand for an existential foundation for the theory. Further more, in order for notions like reification and alienation to assume their full meaning, it would have been necessary for the questioner and the questioned to be made one."[48] Erich Fromm also describes Marxism as a philosophy of "spiritual existentialism in secular language." This remark refers to that character of Marxism which is existentialised. Erich Fromm, therefore, remarks, "Marx is primarily concerned with the emancipation of man as an individual, the overcoming of alienation, the restoration of his capacity to relate himself fully to man and to nature."[49]

45. M. Mitin : "Lenin and Problem of Man", Soviet Review, Vol. V. No. 1, Jan. 6, 1968.
46. M. N. Sinha : A Primer of Existentialism, op. cit., p. 44.
47. Ibid.
48. J. P. Sartre : The Problem of Method, p. 117.
49. Erich Fromm : Marx's Concept of Man, p. 5.

Karl Jaspers elucidates in his three lectures entitled "Existentialism and Humanism" that "Existentialism relegates power to the sphere of reality which may destroy us but cannot affect our existence proper. It does not underrate the ever alien, often hostile outside world where reality holds away; but it delimits its total dominion by teaching self-sustenance, by purging man's inner world of false concepts and useless desires, showing him ways to a deeper happiness, and reinforcing and expanding the realm of his spirit."[50] Further, he explains that it would be just as wrong to charge existentialism with lack of social awareness. "The social problems are included among the tensions between pure existence and the objective world that must be mastered; only, they constitute no prime function of existence, are subordinate to it.'[51] No doubt, this way of life sets existentialism essentially aloof from socialism, in which the ego emerges from and is subordinate to the community. Existentialism takes its stand by admitting that in a given situation man can realize himself by taking his place in the community, but the community always remains a mean; it is never the end.

The existential thinkers suggest how to remove many social problems and tension. A large number of problems are the products of historical events. It is very awareness of history that is supposed to arouse and unfold the feeling in the individual. "Awareness of history necessarily requires the individual to be entwined with the community in which he lives—and especially with the decisive, historically independent living entity, the nation. As human existence is essentially a 'living-in-the-world', and in particular a 'being-together-with-others', the heritage that man has handed down to him cannot but be a joint heritage in which he finds himself associated with his

50. "Existentialism and Humanism: Three Essays by Karl Jaspers, p. 9.

51. Ibid., p. 12.

fellows, linked by a common history."[52] Man is thus incapable of self-reflection without reflecting on his own historic conditioning. This is the point where existentialism touches humanism. Since for Sartre there is no recourse for man beyond space and time; time becomes one of the most noteworthy symbols of man's finitude and anguish in a meaningless world. Human existence is completely coloured by history. "Everything which is moulded by human hands is at the same time carried away by the flux and reflux of history, formed a new by each new minute, and it causes around it a thousand unforeseen repercussions."[53] Sartre suggests that, in so far as the past defines the self, it can be sorted into a series of objectively determinable facts, but Marcel believes that the past cannot be reduced. The climate of the age always affects the one who seeks to judge history and "this historically conditioned attitude is something, for all of us, quite inescapable."[54]

Prof. G. Srinivasan, a learned Indian scholor of Existentialism has made appreciable attempt at finding out a few meeting-points between existentialism and Hindu philosophical systems regarding human pathos and predicaments. He observes that the phenomenon of death finds a special emphasis in both Existentialism and Hindu philosophy. Like the existentialists, the Hindu philosophers affirm the inevitability of death and the transitoriness of human existence. The self-delusion is the basis of inauthentic existence. The phenomenon of death is thus created with an 'ethical' significance in both Existentialism and the Hindu philosophical systems. Secondly, the existential philosophy of Sartre and Heidegger is essentially a philosophy of human finiteness whereas the Hindu philosophical system seeks to develop a philosophy of human transcen-

52. O. F. Bollow : Philosophy of Existence, W. Kohlhammer Verlag, Stuttgart, quoted in "Three Essays by Karl Jaspers, p. 12.
53. Marcel : The Mystery of Being, Part I, p. 160,
54. Ibid., p. 160.

dence. The philosophy of human finiteness has special relevance to the specific time of its origin whereas the philosophy of human 'transcendence' claims to have relevance for all times. Thirdly, the identification of the metaphysical interests of man with his ethical and spiritual interest distinguishes the Hindu philosophical systems from Existentialism. The Hindu philosophical systems, in general, do not divorce the metaphysical interest from the ethical and spiritual interest. Fourthly, the concept of a transcendent objective value of Sartre and Heidegger falls outside the scope of a phenomenological description of human existence. Their description of human existence falls strictly within the empirical limits of birth and death, and hence man is supposed to lie beyond death. All values are here necessarily empirical, humanistic and non-spiritual. There are no *a priori* and absolute values. Man creates all values and death annihilates them. Finally, the authentic choice in Hindu Philosophy is not oriented towards death but towards the realisation of a spiritual value.[55]

Rintelen, a celebrated critic of existentialism, has presented a philosophical survey revealing its shortcomings and limitations. He concludes his observation in these words: "Instead of recovering the fullness of the spirit and the riches of life, our philosophers deny the power of the spirit and found their ontological statements on the mood of Angst (and despair) as the ultimate answer, though this is itself largely the consequence of the destruction brought about by the inferior formal intellect. Thus, deprived of authentic transcendence, we are confronted with the hopelessness actually sought by many of our contemporaries and with the infinite loneliness which requires existential greatness to be endured and fails to find a genuine relation to external action."[56] The existentialist thinkers have regarded pleasure, peace and zeal as the inherent traits of

55. G. Srinivasan : op. cit., pp. 12-34.
56. J. Von Rintelen : Beyond Existentialism, George Allen & Unwin, 1961, p. 219.

human beings, caused by external forces. If anyone asks them as to what is the natural form of man ? The existentialists will unhesitatingly declare that it is inertia, nausea and pain. Such answers look very natural under the present highly disturbed atmosphere, where the entire humanity is passing through precarious position. But it should be borne in mind that to tolerate the pangs of life is not a permanent solution but a defensive attitude for the time being. Existential attitude is, in a sense, passive resistance.

A few critics have given recognition to existentialism either as a product or branch of Marxism. H. J. Blackham says, "There is the elaborate examination of existentialism by the Hungrarian Marxist Professor Lukas, who treats it as the last vain effort of bourgeois intellectuals to find a third way beyond materialism and a bankrupt idealism."[57] Now, viewed from different angles, Max Charlesworth, a well-known critic of existentialism, has made an assessment of existentialism. He says that first of all, on the profit side, there is no doubt that existentialism has performed a great service in bringing philosophy back to the world of concrete experience, the world of "lived experience" (le vr u) as Saitre calls it. Secondly, this return to lived experience has resulted in a breaking down of the barriers between philosophy and literature and art in general. All the existentialists think that it is a central task of philosophy to elaborate what they call an "anthropologie", a general view of man and of his place in the world what Andre Malraux calls *"la condition humane"*. Thirdly, Existentialism has gone against the prevailing wind of twentieth century thought which has tended to see man and his behaviour as part of nature. After Marx, and Freud, man has been seen as the product of his history and of his socio-economic environment, or as the product of biological and psychic forces, and he has been stripped of any special or privileged status. As against this naturalistic and scientific view of man, the existentialists have

57. H. J. Blackham : Six Existentialist Thinkers, p. 156.

insisted upon the irreducible uniqueness of man. For them the world of human freedom stands over against the world of scientific determinism and can never be assimilated to it. The great French anthropologist, Claude L'evi Strauss, has explained that Sartre has a pre-scientific view of man in that he thinks, along with all the other existentialists, that human culture cannot in the end be explained in terms of the natural sciences. Max Charlesworth further explains that on the debit side of existentialism, there are all the things that the English philosophers say about it—its obscurity, its lack of logical rigour, its reliance upon uncontrolled intuition, its confusion between facts and values. Again, apart from Sartre and Camus, the existentialists have paid little serious attention to the social and political dimension of man's existence.[58]

Collin Wilson has pointed out certain shortcomings in existentialism.[59] He remarks that existentialist, like romanticism, is a philosophy of freedom which has reached a standstill because no existential thinker can agree that there are any values outside man—that is, outside man's ordinary everyday consciousness. Now, the man is in the fog. If we direct our attention to Sartre and Heidegger, we can instantly see why their existentialism is so unsatisfactory that the great trumpet call of optimism no longer sounds. There is no clear road forward. Heidegger concludes that man achieves 'authenticity' only in the face of death. Sartre's analysis of human situation, leads him to feel that there is no 'life purpose', no absolute values. The only possible way forward lies in commitment to social politics. All roads are blocked but this one. The central problem of existentialism is man's contingèncy. It is logically impossible to deny that we do not know whether we shall 'breathe out the very breath we now breathe in'. Consequently, if we are striking to 'hard facts', Omar Khayyama is in a far sounder position than

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58. Max Charlesworth : The Existentialists and Jean-Paul Sartre, pp. 70-71.
59. Collin Wilson : Intro. to New Existentialism, p. 33.

Sartre as an existentialist thinker. Sartre says we know nothing except the man need bread and justice. Omar Khayyam replies that we know nothing except that politicians and philosophers die like animals, so we had better 'fill the cup' and enjoy the present.[60]

Existentialists have given us no philosophy of nature, but only an anthropological fragment. The impact of negativistic view on our practical feelings and endeavours is vividly expressed in certain passages of Sartre. If events merely happen without reason, there is no moral justification. One aim is as arbitray as another. "Human being is a useless passion...and to intoxicate yourself alone in a bar or to conduct the nation is equally vain".[61] Life itself is absurd. More than this, existence itself is absurd. It is orderless, structureless. Sartre expresses it in his book entitled Nausea : "All these existents which burstled about...Came from nowhere and were going nowhere. Existence everywhere infinitely in excess (de trop) forever and everywhere : existence, which is limited only by existence. I sank down on the bench, strepefied, stunned by this profussion of beings without source...".[62]

In existentialism, irrationalism is concerned with the strange moral solipsism which runs through Kierkegaard's writings and culminates in morbid individualism. It is often expressed in the writings of Sartre : "Hell is other people." His major work, L' Etre et le Neant, ends with an account of the inevitable tension between alien individual, each a world in himself, and each attempting to absorb and to transcend the other. As he puts it finally : "The essence of relations between awareness is not Mitsein: it is conflict.'.[63] He is here expressing a one-sided moral solipsism. Kierkegaard was conscious of this danger. "It

60. Ibid., pp. 33-98.
61. J. P. Sartre : L' Etre et le Neat, p. 708 (Tr. Wild).
62. J. P. Sartre : La Neasea : p. 178 (Tr. Wild).
63. J. P. Sartre : L' Etre et le Neat, p. 502 (Tr. Wild).

is dangerous", he says, "to isolate oneself too much, to evade the bonds of society".[64] He struggled with the problems of communication. Jaspers and others have made penetrating but disjoined observations and comments on this complex phenomenon. But their disparagement of theoretical reason has made it impossible for them to work out any coherent account of human communication. No adequate or even noteworthy social philosophy has yet come from existentialist sources. This is a striking weakness.

For Ayer and the other analysists, existentialism is seen as a kind of bad joke. As Prof. John Passmore has put in his A Hundred Years of Philosophy : "Most British philosophers are convinced that continental metaphysics is arbitray, pretentions and mind-destroying...Even when Existentialism reflects certain aspects of British empiricism, it does so in the manner of the distorting mirrors in a Fun Fair; what seemed eminently rational and ordinary suddenly looks grotesque".[65] In the same tune, another critic remarks that "In rejecting a false and extreme objectivity, existentialism seems to have minimised the importance of science, the external world, reason, and the many valid insights of other kinds of philosophy. If reason alone cannot solve the central problems of existence, is there any assurance that passion alone can do so ? As reaction to those who ignore the subject, existentialists tend to ignore the object. Furthermore, their critics claim that the existentialists are giving an inadequate description of even the human experience that is their prime concern. In addition to studying experience itself, men need to ask *what* it is that we experience, and hence to study the outside world".[66]

64, Kierkegaard : Journals, p. 62.
65. J. Passmore : A Hundred Years of Philosophy, Duckworth, London, 1957, p. 460.
66. Harold H. Titus : Living Issues in Philosophy (Eurasia) Publishing House (P) Ltd., New Delhi), p. 312.

It will be more profitable to remind ourselves of the wry comment of an Italian idealist: "Existentialism deals with existence in the manner of a thriller."[67] Again, existentialism is the depiction of modernity but not of eternity. Indeed, "...all the existentialists realize that they are writing not for all time but for their own time. The writings of the non-Christian existentialists especially belong peculiarly to the twentieth century."[68] Berdyaev begins his chapter on "Sartre and the Future of Existentialism" by saying: "The extraordinary philosophy of Sartre and the fashion for existentialism are symptoms of our time."[69] Existential negative attitude or reaction towards rationality and intellectual understanding leads indeed many a present-day philosopher not to consider Existentialism as a serious philosophy of all. They tend to look upon it as an attitude or curative prescription to meet the spiritual malady of the times, rather than as an academic philosophy in the strict sense. Thus, for instance, Bernard Russel sharply remarks on Existentialism that "it does not make a philosophic criticism so much as an emotional protest on psychological grounds."[70] Thus, the realm of existential philosophy is not the integral depiction of human life but a partial one.

67. Guido de Ruggiero: Existentialism; trans. E. M. Cocks (London: Secker and Warberg, 1946), p. 19.
68. F. Temple Knight: French Existentialism—A Christian Critique, p. 37.
69. N. Berdyaev: Towards a New Epoch, p. 95.
70. Bernard Russel in The Wisdom of the West, Chapter on "Existentialism".

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Index

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Dr. Tripathi's career is distinguished by a single-minded pursuit of learning. His work displays wide and deep reading as well as a great maturity of judgment.

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Some Opinions About the Book

I have read through the book, *Meaning of Life in Existentialism* by Dr. Bashishtha Narain Tripathi very carefully. In fact, once I started reading it, I did not put it down till I had finished reading it. The work is so interesting and thought-provoking that it is certain to find a wide circle of readers who are interested in this important philosophical trend in Europe, which attracted the attention of many thinkers, writers and even public men. I have no doubt that this scholarly work will win for it many admiring readers in this country. I congratulate Dr. B. N. Tripathi on this fine work.

Prof. N. S. S. Raman,
Prof. & Head, Deptt of Philosophy
Banaras Hindu University Varanasi.

I find in Dr. B.N. Tripathi's Meaning of Life in Existentialism a scholarly and illuminating study of a very important tradition in Contemporary Western Thought. So complete is Dr. Tripathi's delineation of the theme on hand that it is difficult to find therein the omission of any aspect or facet of Existentialism which really matters and counts. It is splendid in its fullness.

Prof S. S. Roy
Ex-Prof. and Head, Deptt. of Philosophy,
University of Allahabad, Allahabad.

Dr. Bashishtha Narain Tripathi has focussed his study on the central ethical question of life : how to invest life with meaning when existence is synonymous with the absurd, the irrational and the contingent. Dr. Tripathi's treatment of this vital problem is compendious and illuminating and extensive reading in various disciplines has gone into the production of this book. Relating existentialism to Literature, Marxism, Humanism, Theology and Psycho-analysis, Dr. Tripathi has presented a comprehensive view of the thought of the major existentialist thinkers from Kierkegaard to Sartre. Students and general readers interested in the ethical implications of existentialism should find this volume extremely useful.

Prof. G. B. Mohan Thampi,
Formerly Prof. Deptt. of English, Banaras Hindu University,
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Kerala University (Trivendrum)

Most of the problems in theory and consequent practice which the world is facing today find treatment together with the differing approaches to their handlings in this comprehensive study of existentialist philosophy painstakingly documented from original propounders as well as from their major antagonists. It is a rare achievement bringing out in-depth the mystery of existentialism as well as its sharp critical reasoning, covering all its ramifications and applications in art and literature, psychic treatment and political practice. Every scholar of the subject will get something out of the insights revealed by the author.

Prof. Raja Ram Shastri,
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......Dr. Tripathi's very well documented, lucid and extremely informative exposition of a difficult and controversial philosophical system will be of immense use for scholars of world literature............ an exhaustive treatment of the subject and a great service to future researches in literature and philosophy.

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